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Fishback, James.

Essays and dialogues, on the  
powers and susceptibilities

Nov. 1880.

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# ESSAYS AND DIALOGUES,

ON

THE POWERS

AND SUSCEPTIBILITIES OF THE HUMAN MIND

FOR

## RELIGION;

SHOWING THE NECESSITY OF THE WORD OF GOD,

OR OF

SUPERNATURAL REVELATION,

TO THE EXISTENCE OF IT IN THE PRESENT

FALLEN STATE OF MAN:

AND ON MANY OTHER OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

OF

## CHRISTIANITY.

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BY JAMES FISHBACK,

AUTHOR OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND  
IN REGARD TO RELIGION.

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“Beware, lest any man spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”—PAUL.

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LEXINGTON:

J. CLARKE & CO., UPPER STREET.

1834.



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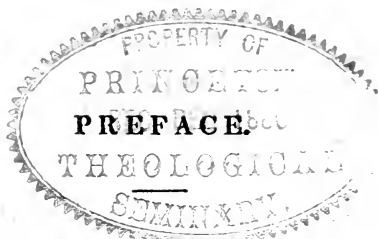
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This volume is published from a sense of the importance of the subjects investigated in it to the spiritual and moral improvement and happiness of mankind. The subject matter of it, in a great measure, has been under the habitual consideration of the author since the year 1802, and was first prompted by a great religious excitement that existed at that time in the western country; out of which three new religious denominations were founded, one of which were the Shakers.

In the year 1813 he published a volume entitled "The Philosophy of the human mind in regard to religion," which was produced by the same cause, and embraced in some degree a few of the subjects of this volume, though in a less perspicuous manner.

It is believed that an erroneous philosophy of the human mind, and unscriptural views of the operations of the Spirit of God, and of the origin, nature and use of the word of God, in the communication of Spiritual knowledge, according to which God gives religion, exist, and have existed more or less since early after the Apostolic age, and are the causes of the slow progress, errors, and imperfections of the Christian Religion, and of the Christian character in the world.

If these errors exist, they must be sought out and corrected by a patient and candid investigation of the various subjects in which they are found, with an humble, trembling regard for the word of God. Nothing can obviate the necessity of such an investigation; nor should any danger of being opposed or condemned prevent it. Nor should any measure or degree of attachment to or confidence in existing views and systems, prevent the friends and lovers of truth from

carefully reading it. This volume is employed, in part, in the investigation of these things.

Why is it that the world is not now converted to the Christian Religion? Why is it that but little more of the surface of this globe is covered with Christianity, with the exception of America, than there was when the last of the Apostles died? Why is it that Christians are all cut up and divided into sects, contrary to the ardent intercessory prayer of Jesus Christ, just before he entered upon his sufferings, that all who believe in him through the word of the Apostles might be one, as he is in the Father and the Father in him, that the world might believe that the Father had sent him? John xvii; 20, 21, 23.

Why is it that the word of God is by many of its most learned advocates, believed to have been invented and stipulated by men, as the things of God, that it reveals, were discovered by them, and which only becomes the word of God by his using it in making his communications to our world, and which reveals nothing that was not discovered by the human mind without revelation? Can any person receive the word of God "not as the word of man, but as it is in truth and indeed the word of God which effectually works in all who do thus believe it," who entertain the above sentiments? I think not.

And why is it that others believe that the word of God is a sealed book and a dead letter, and that it imparts no spiritual idea or information to the human mind, previous to the immediate physical operation of the Spirit, by which the soul or spirit of man is regenerated; and that the word of God's grace in the gospel has nothing to do in the regeneration of man; and who pay no attention to the religious education of their children on that account! These are questions of the most serious import, and demand the most patient and dispassionate attention. Either the Christian Religion is incapable of converting the world by its own intrinsic and divine sense and meaning as revealed and ordained of God, and of sustaining itself in the world under the omnipotent reign of Jesus Christ, or God is unwilling that it



shall, and withholds the regular and necessary influences from the means that he has ordained to effect it, or he does not impart to the minds of mankind the powers and susceptibilities which render them capable of being converted. These things must be true, or the means which he has appointed and the constitution of the minds of men are misapprehended and misdirected, and thereby fail to accomplish the end. I do not believe in the unwillingness of God or in the impotency of Jesus Christ to convert the world by the gospel. God has as manifestly a system and plan according to which sinners are to be brought to the knowledge of the truth and the world is to be converted, as he has a system and order in any thing else agreeably to which he accomplishes his ends.

That the word of God may be perverted or corrupted and rendered inefficient, all must acknowledge who are acquainted with the religious history of the world. Every age affords proof of it; and also that man is capable by his intellectual and moral constitution, of refusing to attend to the things of God as he has revealed them, and of abusing his own faculties and powers by desecrating them and rejecting the council of God, and which God has always punished. The history of religion before and at the fall of man, and since the fall, comprehending the ante-diluvian and post-diluvian patriarchal states, and the Mosaical and Christian dispensations prove these things. It proves moreover that the corruptions of the word of God, which have been effected by altering or perverting it through ignorance or wicked design to promote selfish or carnal and superstitious and idolatrous purposes, uniformly corrupt the minds and morals of the mass of mankind on whom they operate; and that their purity is always in a due proportion to the purity of the word of God which operates upon them, and to the extent of its operation. The conclusions of the mind depend altogether, not on the evidence which exists, but on that portion of it which is attended to. It is not for mankind to create the light of the Gospel, or to give themselves spiritual powers and susceptibilities of mind, which render them capable of religion, but it is for them to open and present their eyes,

through which their hearts must be affected, to all the manifestations and evidence of the Gospel of God's grace, which is spirit and life. If God has communicated light and grace from the invisible world to qualify men for knowing and enjoying him, they should direct the eyes of their understandings and their hearts towards them and cherish their influence. The Gospel of God's grace was intended to purify and sanctify mankind, and it does so when it operates upon them in its own appropriate, divine sense and meaning, understood and believed. The whole affair of salvation from the beginning to the end, is of the sovereign grace of God. Man has no power to save himself; and the only question relates to the suitableness of the Gospel of God's grace by his appointment to affect it. To assert that the Gospel is essentially unsuited and insufficient, under the mediation of Jesus Christ in whom is the fulness of the God-head bodily, in the administration of the covenant of the Spirit, to convert the world of mankind and to unite and make it happy, would be to charge the divine Saviour with a want of wisdom, power and love. And to deny that God is willing to convert the world by the Gospel and to give it to his Son for his inheritance, would be to contradict his own explicit declarations, and to impute unfaithfulness to him. And to deny that the human mind, notwithstanding its corruption and depravity, has spiritual powers and susceptibilities which render it capable, under the influence of the Gospel of God's grace, of being spiritually illuminated and converted to God through Jesus Christ, would be to deny to man, though guilty and ruined, moral existence, and to deny that God gives faith by his word and purifies the hearts of sinners by faith, and that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. And it would be to contradict all those expressions in the word of God in the Old and in the New Testament, in which he charged *sin* against those who refused to attend to, and to believe the divine testimony that he gave of divine things. Are not the moral powers and susceptibilities which are exercised and manifested by idolaters in pagan worship, the same which render them capable of the

enlightening and sanctifying influences of the gospel, and of being converted to God by the Gospel. These powers and susceptibilities are the objects of a missionary's attention as they were of Paul's when he preached to the heathen. And the whole business of converting the world lies in the narrow compass of enlightening and purifying the souls of mankind by the operation of gospel truth upon these powers and susceptibilities and training them by the grace of God to spiritual purity. The only objection to this arises from an erroneous philosophy and from unscriptural views of the operations of God's Spirit.

Protestant Christians do not expect any new revelations of the Spirit, nor the creation of new faculties in the human mind, nor the repetition of miracles, in order that men shall believe in Jesus Christ, or that Christians shall rectify any thing that is erroneous or wrong in their views of religion. They all agree that their faith is produced by the word of God, and is to be resolved into its sense and meaning. In all ages when God gave a revelation of himself and will, he required of mankind to receive it and to act according to it. And he admitted no excuse for the violation or rejection of it. He punished them for it. In the Gospel, which is the last revelation ever to be made until the end of the world, he requires his people to correct their own errors in christian doctrine, spirit and conduct, and tenders to them all the aid that is necessary to do it through the use of their faculties by the investigation of the truth and by prayer. And he requires of sinners also to believe the Gospel. He gives to them all the power and susceptibilities that are necessary. He will give to neither the one nor the other any new revelations of the Spirit because they are unnecessary, to enable them to do these things.

Where error exists in regard to the word of God, that error must be corrected before the word can have free course and be glorified. Until corrected, its consequences will continue and must be endured by all upon whom it operates. And no amount of talents, labour, zeal, expense or prayer, that may be employed, and no measure of success that may

attend them, will compensate for, or can remedy the evil consequences of error—"whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap." Were the whole world to be converted by christianity corrupted, God would require it to be converted over again and to be purified by the pure Gospel. There is now but little proportion between the efforts that are made for the propagation and establishment of the Christian religion, even in Christendom, and their success. Every thing indicates that there is something wrong among us all. God is surely as willing now to convert the world as he ever has been, or will be, and is much more willing than any of his people, notwithstanding many of them seem to think otherwise. "He is of one mind, who can turn him"! Job xxiii, 13. There is a difference between *his* views and plan, and the views and plan, to a considerable degree, which many good men have formed. His plan is according to things as *he* sees them. He speaks now to his people as he did to ancient Israel—"O that my people had hearkened unto me and Israel had walked in my ways: I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto me, but their time should have endured forever." Psalm lxxxi, 12-15.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. The atonement is the medium through which God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, has revealed his light and salvation to our lost world, and through which all his blessings come. Without it and its consequences we have no religion. It is an axiom in morals as well as in the religion of the New Testament, that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The history and present state of the world prove it, as does the state of every christian sect; they are all pure as this doctrine is held in righteousness. The God of grace is only known through the atonement, and he is revealed by the Trinity. There is in consequence of the fall, no natural religion, or knowledge of God independent of his own revelation. The whole science of theology consists in the knowledge of the sense and meaning of the word of God; and practical religion consists

in cherishing its spirit, and in practising its duties. The doctrines of the Gospel are the foundation and frame-work of christianity, and practical piety is its covering and ornament. Both are necessary to the stability and beauty of the edifice.

Those who feel no interest in doctrinal subjects, overlook the abasing truths which Paul calls "the offence of the cross." The duty of faith and repentance, and their privilege and happiness too, have their foundation in the doctrine of human depravity, and of the atonement; and the atonement is the foundation of saving faith.

God has given to man no natural or moral ability to believe in, and love him without Jesus Christ; nor has he in the absence of the Gospel. His religion giving operation is by the Gospel itself understood and believed. By this a natural man is made a spiritual man, and sinners are born to God and made heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. This is provided for and is conferred upon them through the rich provisions of *the covenant of the Spirit*, and is received by faith in Jesus Christ, who is "made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." We should therefore only glory in the Lord.

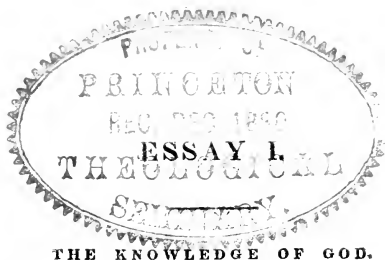
The reason why men remain *dead* in trespasses and sins *in a christian land*, is because christians *live* in trespasses and sins, and therefore do not quicken and convert them by the Gospel of God's grace which is spirit and life.

Before the world can be converted the sentiment must become universal among all Bible Christians, that the word of the Gospel in its *true sense and meaning is the religion for this whole world*, and is the ordained means of God to enlighten and convert mankind; and that it is the privilege and happiness of all to be converted, while it is the duty of christians to convert them by imparting the truth to them, and by the example of a pious, holy life. The understanding, the judgment, and the affections must all be enlightened, convinced and engaged by the truth of the Gospel. This would lead to the use of the word of God, and particularly the Gospel in every grade of education, and to improvement and duty

from the cradle to the grave. All the languages that are learnt should be learnt to a considerable extent, by reading the Scriptures translated into them. By these means all christians will become united in one hearty fellowship, and the Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in all things. Periodical religious excitements will give way to *perennial* ones, which will be distinguished by vigorous, healthy, spiritual action and enjoyment, perpetually sustained by the grace and truth of God.

The design of the investigations in this book, is to promote these ends. Their direct tendency is to augment the importance of the Bible and of the Bible Society cause in the public mind, and to create and increase a desire for reading and understanding the Scriptures. The sentiment must become more universal than it is now, or has been for a long time, that the Bible is a revelation from God, and teaches all that can be known of spiritual things, and was written to be read and understood by all men. And that it is the means through which God communicates faith in Jesus Christ, makes mankind happy, and saves their souls.

Until these be done the people will not read or desire to read the Scriptures from proper views, and the labor and expense of the friends of the Bible Society cannot find an equivalent in the good that they do, in supplying every family with a bible. Were the friends of the bible to employ one half of their efforts and labors in *proving* to the people that the scriptures were written to be read and understood by them, they would *sell* one hundred bibles to be *actually read*, where they *give* one now, whether it be read or not.



THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

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The knowledge of God essential to religion — That knowledge is not natural to man in his fallen state, but supernatural — God is an object of faith as is the fact of creation — They are made known by revelation — The powers and operations of the mind, examined and limited in proof of the foregoing propositions.

THE existence of God is the foundation of all religion. This truth will be evident if we remember that the word *religion* always denotes either a system of truth of which God is the great subject, or a system of affections and conduct of which he is the supreme object.

Without the knowledge of the existence of God in some degree, no person can be said to possess religion either in thought or affection. Knowledge consists in the perception of that which exists, or of truth and fact, or the perception and agreement, or disagreement, or repugnancy of our ideas. Our ideas are the signs of things, and are the elements of our knowledge, as words are the signs of our ideas. We cannot have any knowledge of that which does not exist, nor have we any knowledge of that whose existence is not perceived.

Religious knowledge consists in the perception of the existence of God, of his operations and character, and of the relations which we sustain to him, and the duties he requires of us.

God is not an object of sense, but of faith. No man has seen him at any time, the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared or revealed him.

When I say that God is not an object of sense, but of faith, I mean that his existence cannot be perceived or inferred from nature or from mind, independent of revelation made in words or verbal language. Objects of faith in this sense are those which are made known by supernatural revelation, as distinguished from those which are made known by nature or natural phenomena or appearances.

God exists distinct from, and independent of the objects of sense and of their appearances, which they manifest by the operation of their laws or powers and substances. God is therefore, not naturally perceived — that is, nature does not make any original suggestion of his existence to the mind by any of her operations. It is the duty of a thoroughly instructed natural Philosopher to explain all natural phenomena or natural appearances upon natural principles, and in all investigations of nature, having arrived at first principles, he is bound to stop there and to consider himself as having arrived at the utmost limits of natural science. These limits have no naturally perceived connection with or dependence upon God, and of course his existence cannot be inferred from them.

The *fact* of creation is an *object* of faith, as is the *existence* of God — they are both made known by revelation. *Sense* informs us that the worlds are, and that all the various objects, substances, laws or powers, and properties of nature, exist, whether animate or inanimate, physical or metaphysical, and moral; but *faith*, or the revelations of God by his word, teach us that they were made; and by revelation we know that spiritual beings exist, and that all of them except God were made.



It is the language of revelation alone that there was a beginning of the sensible universe, and that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing, or that he created the elements out of which he made them.

As the mind, in viewing the phenomena or appearances of nature, cannot perceive any thing but the powers or laws and substances which are employed in producing them, so in its own states and operations, it is not conscious of the existence, presence or operation of any being or thing extraneous to itself or to its own powers and feelings, and the objects of its perceptions and feelings or the organs through which it is impressed, and the sensible circumstances in which it is placed. Neither in the former or latter case does it perceive, or is it conscious of the existence or agency of God, because he exists distinct from, and independent of nature and of her substances and laws, and of the mind and its powers, susceptibilities and consciousness, and has no *sensibly* perceived connection with or dependence upon either. If therefore, God exists and operates in either or in both of these cases, the knowledge of it must be obtained, not from nature, but from external supernatural revelation, as the objects are objects of faith and not of natural sight or sense or deduction from nature, or of natural consciousness. From these premises I assert, that to man's fallen state there is no original natural knowledge of God, and of course that there is no *Natural Religion* distinguished from revealed religion.

The existence and operations of God being distinct from the existence and operations of nature, the existence and operations of God are objects of faith and are only known through an original supernatural revelation — supernatural I mean, to man's fallen, natural state. This revelation made at different times and in various manners, from the

fall of man, has been handed down to succeeding ages by oral traditions and rites of worship, and by written words. It began at the fall and was gradually enlarged by additional communications from God to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and particularly to these, and was perfected by Jesus Christ in the Gospel. Religion has existed in the world since man was made, but I repeat that it is not natural to his fallen state:—to his primitive, pure estate, the one in which he was made, religion was natural—it formed a part of the state in which he was made. To know and love God, and to enjoy communion with him formed a part of the image and likeness of God in which he was created. By the fall, man lost them. These endowments, which were natural to man's estate of innocence and purity, are, by reason of the loss he sustained by sin, supernatural and miraculous to his estate of guilt, as is the knowledge of them. Man, by violating the covenant and law of innocence in Paradise, changed or altered his state, and lost all that constituted the image and likeness of God. God withdrew from him the light of his countenance, and all the co-eval endowments, which he bestowed upon him at his creation, and which constituted his innate, spiritual and natural knowledge, and his righteousness, true holiness and happiness ceased. From that period, God's government in relation to man was changed or reorganized, and was made to assume a *mediatorial* character, and had reference to the *incarnation and personal manifestation* of God the word, his atonement and the new covenant which was to be ratified by his blood, which was appointed to be shed for the remission of sins. The propitiatory death of Jesus Christ was the great event in the divine purpose and grace which were given to us in Christ before the world began, in reference to which God made all his communications in promises and blessings to our guilty world after

the fall, and through which, by faith, he freely and graciously justified sinners, and held communion with them from the fall of Adam to the advent of Messiah: Rom. iii, 24, 26; 2 Tim. i, 9; Heb. ix, 15. When the Scriptures were written the knowledge of God existed in the world, but they never hint that that knowledge existed in the world independent of antecedent revelations, but abound with testimony to the contrary, and prove conclusively that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God. In every period of the world, since the fall of man, if the knowledge of God and of divine things which had been previously obtained from God, had been entirely lost, or taken away, and new revelation had been withheld, the human mind would have been totally destitute of any idea of God, or of spiritual existence, or of the beginning or creation of the world. Hence it is true that since man fell, exclusive of what he remembered of God and of what he knew of spiritual things before and at the fall, all that he has known or does know of God has been communicated to him by external revelation, *in words*, which were for the most part associated with miraculous works when made, as they are in the record, to confirm and illustrate their divine truth.

This has been the source and character of all true religious knowledge that our world has possessed since the fall of man, and idolatry originated in its corruption — so that religion has not only been confirmed by miracles, but it has always been miraculous and supernatural to the fallen state of man. It was made known and developed, as I have already observed, in ancient times, and at different periods by God *speaking* to the prophets, and by various typical religious institutions which he ordained: but it was perfected by Jesus Christ in the Gospel. The Bible record gives a short account of the pre-existing revelations.

and a history of God's dealings and conduct towards our world before the time of Moses and since; but there is no case in which God required mankind to know or to believe in, or to worship him without his own revelations, and always charges guilt and condemnation upon them for corrupting, or changing, forgetting, or disbelieving and rejecting his word. Nor did God ever require of men under any dispensation, to cultivate human learning or the science of nature to learn his existence, or to worship him. And it is worthy of remark, that Christ and his Apostles, among all their doctrines and injunctions, never once mentioned human learning, consisting in the science and philosophy of nature, as the means of acquiring the original knowledge of God and of his worship. These things had led off from the knowledge of God as he had revealed himself, and were the cause of corruption and idolatry in every age: read Rom. i, and Deut. iv. In these passages, Paul and Moses concur in proof of what I say — Paul tells us that the Gentiles became idolaters by changing the glory of God which God had showed unto them, into images and idols. This they did because they did not like to *retain* the knowledge of him: — and Moses guards the children of Israel against the same sin to which they were perpetually inclined, and into which they several times fell, with the voice of their prophets perpetually sounding in their ears, and with the stupendous miracles, which God wrought by the hands of Moses and others, glaring in their eyes from every page of their history. And none, after losing the knowledge of God by corrupting his word, or rejecting it, ever regained it but by new revelation. The people always erred, *not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God* therein revealed.

Language or words, in spiritual knowledge, originated in the Logos or word, and is as necessary to our know-

ledge, faith and affections in religion, as light is necessary to our perception of visible objects, and to the state of mind produced by them. God who formed the eye gives to us vision by natural light, and God who formed the mind gives to us spiritual perception and religious knowledge and affection by his word — and as certainly and demonstrably as he has limited our perception of visible objects to the use and influence of natural light upon the eye, has he limited the perception and knowledge of himself and of other spiritual objects to the use and influence of his word, given to us by supernatural revelations. After the mind has obtained the idea and knowledge of God as the creator of the Universe, and the knowledge of the fact that the world was made by him, to it, *through faith*, “the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament sheweth forth his handy work.” This, I say, is the language of faith, and is not found in the vocabulary of nature strictly speaking, or of natural science. David derived the views expressed in the 19th Psalm from revelation.

Feeling the importance of a thorough discussion of this subject to a just knowledge of the nature and design of the word of God as distinguished from the word of man, and of its actual necessity and use to the existence of religion in the mind and heart of man, I will give to the powers and operations of the human mind, a more minute and particular attention as to the ways and means by which it acquires knowledge. By this it will appear, that since his immediate miraculous revelations ceased, *God has limited himself to his own word* in communicating the knowledge of himself to the human mind; and of course that *the religion giving operation of his spirit is by his word*, which, when *received as the word of God*, works effectually in them that believe it.

In accordance with this view, I observe that all the

knowledge we can have of external things *naturally*, we derive from nature by its operations upon the mind through our five senses, the sense of seeing, of hearing, of feeling, of tasting and of smelling. Objects acting upon these produce impressions and sensations. The utmost perfection of our senses can show us only what *is* in reference to the things which impress them at the moment of the perception; not what has been or what will be. There is nothing in any quality of bodies *perceived* by us, which, *without experience*, could enable us to predict the changes that are to occur in them, or instruct us in what had happened. Without experience, then, we could never from nature alone tell that the worlds were created or contrived, or that they ever will be destroyed. But experience has taught us neither of these things, nor that any thing ever was made or contrived out of nothing — all that experience and philosophy can do, is to explain the phenomena or appearances of things that are, and to tell and explain the changes to which things are liable by the operation of the laws and principles of nature; but it is not within the province of experience and philosophy to know or to inquire into the origin of any thing from nothing — nor is there any thing in nature to suggest the thought or the inquiry. There is a want of facts and analogies in the case.

What mind is, independent of its temporary variety of feeling and states, it is impossible for us to discern. Of the essence of mind, or of its duration, we know nothing from nature. In our own sensations uniformly ascribed to particular organs of sense, we find the elements of all our knowledge, the materials on which the mind is ever operating, and without which it seems, as is observed by Stewart, to be impossible to conceive that it ever could have operated at all, or have been conscious of its own existence.

The intellectual operations of our minds are perception, memory, imagination and judgment. The moral operations and powers, which depend upon the intellectual operations for their exercises, are the affections—to these may be added consciousness, which is the feeling the mind has of its own *present state* however produced.

In the exercises of our minds, intellectually and morally, we are conscious to ourselves that we perceive, feel, think, remember, reason, and believe—that we love or hate, are happy or miserable; but we cannot perceive any power or influence by which we do these things, or by which these states of mind are produced, independent of ourselves, and of the objects and their qualities which we perceive, and which excite them, and of the sensible circumstances in which we are placed. If there be any power or influence exterior to our bodies and minds, or separate from them and the things and circumstances which I have stated, by which we are excited or actuated, or are capacitated to act—if *God exists* and has *any agency* in these things, we must, in order to know it, be informed of it by external revelation. The fact of the existence of God and of his agency are objects of faith and not of sight, nor of sense, nor of natural consciousness.

Without faith or revelation in spiritual and religious matters, we can have no religious ideas or feeling, as without the perception of visible objects we can have no feeling produced by them as visible objects. The spirit of God, in whom we live, are moved and have our being, and who sustains all our powers and susceptibilities, we are not naturally sensible or conscious of the existence, presence and operations of, in the feelings, exercises and consciousness of our own minds, more than we are of his existence, presence and operation in external natural operations and appearances. If we apprehend or believe in

his existence and operation in either case, it is the effect of external revelation made to us by words, and confirmed originally by miraculous works—it is the effect of faith.

Nothing affects the feeling of our hearts that is not perceived by our minds. Things operate upon the mind as it perceives them, and not as they are in their own natures.

We can originate no new idea. We can perceive that which impresses our sense, and we can remember what we have perceived, and we can imagine many things, but our imaginations are limited by, and are dependent upon, the materials furnished the mind by previous perceptions, ideas and sensations, and by its own operations and states, for its fabrications. There is nothing found in the complex fabric wrought by the imagination or fancy more than the skill and talents of assorting, combining and arranging the materials, that is not found in the raw materials themselves. This is well expressed by Mr. Hume, and which, by just conclusions from it, is fatal to his natural religion. He observes, “although nothing is so unbounded in its operations as the powers of the mind and the imagination of man—to form monsters and join incongruous shapes and appearances cost the imagination no more trouble than to conceive of the most natural and familiar objects; and while the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty, the imagination and thought can transport us in an instant into the most distant regions of the universe. But although our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to nothing more than the faculty of combining, transposing, augmenting, and diminishing the materials afforded us by sense and experience.”

Analogical reasoning cannot be used or admitted in the



present investigation in originating the idea of God from nature without revelation, because it cannot be employed to produce any original objective ideas. Analogy in philosophy, is a term of relation, proportion or agreement, which several things *known* bear to each other in the view of the mind in some respects, though they differ in others. In reasoning from analogy, from a few points *known* and *allowed*, we deduce a number of others. As analogical reasoning pre-supposes the knowledge of the existence of the things compared, it cannot be used in any theological discussion whatever, until the existence of God is known or conceded; or until the things seen in nature are proved to have been created from nothing, which I assert cannot be done.

The formation of a watch or a house, which consists in the adjustment of certain substances and powers of nature which already exist, for particular purposes, bears no resemblance, relation or proportion, or *analogy* to the *creation* of the substances and powers which compose them, and of course no idea of a creation from nothing can be suggested by them. What these properties and laws are, independent of our perceptions of them, or rather of their appearances, we are totally ignorant, as we are of what the worlds are. Sense informs us that they exist, and consciousness informs us that we exist, and think, and feel and act; but neither informs us that they were created, or that God is, and that he exists distinct from, and independent of matter and its laws, and of the worlds we see, and of our own minds and bodies — none of all these inform us that God created them, or that they were made at all, or that God is, and is every where present and sustains all things, though unperceived: it is the exclusive office of revelation to do these.

Many think that it is a disparagement of God's wisdom

and goodness, to maintain that he has ordained and established a certain system and order of things according to which he makes himself known to mankind, and imparts spiritual knowledge, faith and love, and restores them to himself. Why should it be any more a disparagement of God's wisdom and goodness to believe that he limits the knowledge of himself to his own revelation, than that he limits salvation to the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, or natural vision to light, or the support and nourishment of the body to air and food? The only question for us to solve, is, has God done these things? If he has, our duty and interest are to acquiesce in them, and go along with him in the use of the means he has ordained; for should we violate his order of things in these respects, we shall loose the advantage and benefit of it.

I do sincerely believe, that God has formed the mind with powers and affections which render it *capable* of religion, and that in man's fallen state, God limits religious knowledge to his word revealed by Jesus Christ. And, I do moreover believe, that there is no such thing as natural religion as distinguished from revealed religion. In these sentiments and opinions I feel myself supported by the word of God itself, by the history of the world, and the consciousness of every human mind that will carefully attend to its own operations and states, in acquiring spiritual knowledge, or the knowledge of the existence of God and of spiritual things.

The testimony derived from these sources, authorises me to say, that the fall of man in Adam, lost for him the knowledge of the existence of God and of spiritual things, as they exist distinct from nature and matter, and that religion, after the fall, entered the world by external supernatural revelation in words, and that the religion-giving operation of the spirit of God upon the mind of man, is by his word

through Jesus Christ, the sense and meaning of which the mind is formed to understand, believe and feel, by suitable and proper instruction and culture.

In my next Essay, I will exhibit what seems, from the word of God, and the history of the world, to have been the primeval state of man; what were his co-eval endowments, which constituted the image and likeness of God, in which he was made; how he fell, and what he lost by the fall.

This investigation, will enable us the more clearly and consistently to apprehend God's method of restoring mankind to his fellowship and enjoyment, by his grace through the new covenant, by the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, and the agencies of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

## ESSAY II.

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### CREATION, TRIAL AND FALL OF MAN.

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The image and likeness of God in which man was made—His co-eval endowments—His probation and fall, and the loss of the image of God, without losing his original mental faculties and susceptibilities.

THE scripture informs us, that God created man in his own image, after his own likeness. God the Word was man's Creator. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." All things were made by him and for him, visible and invisible, and he is before all things, and by him they consist.

The image of God, in which man was made, could not relate to man's corporeal part, or animal appetites and passions; because God has no corporeal part, nor animal appetites and passions; but it relates to his spiritual nature, to his intellectual and moral powers, and spiritual endowments. In that state of man's likeness to God, his spirit could not have been ignorant, evil, low or base. The image of God, in which he was made, must have comprehended the knowledge and love of God, and fellowship with him, and the knowledge of the creatures which God had made, together with the knowledge and use of language upon natural and spiritual subjects, and dominion of the world.

This knowledge and use of language, and the knowledge of natural and spiritual things, were co-eval endowments, bestowed upon man by his munificent Creator, at

the moment that he gave him existence. Hence, we find in the short account given us in the three first chapters of Genesis, that God and man spake together in the most familiar and intimate manner. Adam named every living creature, by divine direction, which God had made; for “the Lord God brought them to Adam to see what he would call them,” to give proof of his knowledge of their nature and of his knowledge and use of language, “and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field:” Gen. ii, 19, 20. Adam did not learn in these cases by the slow process of observation and experience, as we do. He invented nothing—but all was communicated to him immediately by his Maker, the Word or Logos. Adam knew as God knew; he saw as God saw; and he spake as God spake, in this case. His mind was the image of God’s mind in these things, and in his affections.

These endowments were characteristic of man’s state in his first creation, to which we have nothing analogous but in what occurred on the day of pentecost, and at different times afterwards during the Apostolic age, in the knowledge of spiritual things, and in the gift of tongues and the love of God. These were bestowed by the Word or Logos *made flesh*, after his glorious exaltation at the commencement of *the new creation*, upon *the new made men*, who were renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created them. They spake, in languages or tongues, which they had not known before, and which they were taught immediately by God, the wonderful works of God. All that they said was in reference to Jesus Christ, and partook of the new creation.

In the original and present state of man, we must distinguish the powers or faculties, and the susceptibili-

ties, which were, and are, essential to his existence and nature as a moral creature, from their actual improvement or endowment with knowledge which is necessary to their exercise and perfection. Without this distinction, we cannot conceive how man could have been made either wise or ignorant, or how sin could have been committed, or how any change could have been produced, or how it now can be in his intellectual or moral state.

Man's capacity for knowing and loving God, and for the enjoyment of him, and for the knowledge and use of language, existed and now exists distinct from, and independent of its actual improvement and exercise in these things. Man does not possess innate ideas, or innate knowledge of God or of natural things, nor does he possess innate knowledge of language; but, in the divine constitution of his nature, he does possess native powers and susceptibilities, which capacitate him for acquiring them; and God, in the spiritual and natural economy, has ordained and appointed means for their attainment and improvement. These are applied and used by the influence of education. Every parent, and teacher, and missionary, acts upon these principles.

Since immediate revelation ceased, the spiritual means of instruction are to be found in the Gospel of God's grace, and in previous revelations, preserved and perpetuated by traditions or by written records.

In man's first estate, the actual possession and exercise of these endowments, as they were distinguished from the original moral faculties, depended upon immediate divine communications and influences. These were bestowed upon him, and might be withdrawn, and yet all the original native powers or faculties and susceptibilities remain. Agreeably to these views, when God made man at first, he formed in him what may be called *natural principles*

consisting in *mere human nature*, and such as I have observed were essential to it, comprehending the body with its various members, organs, senses and powers; and the human soul or spirit, with its powers of intellect and its moral susceptibilities, including the appetites and passions. These belong to, and constitute the nature of man in every circumstance and condition irrespective of good or evil. They existed as well before the fall as they have since.

These, when alone and left to themselves, under the influence and controul of the objects of sense and animal appetite, are what the scriptures call *flesh*, and constitute the *natural* or *carnal* man: they are all earthly and selfish. In this state, sensual gratification, man's love of himself, his carnal liberty, honour and pleasure are exercised. Besides these principles of *nature*, there were *divine spiritual endowments* bestowed upon man, consisting in the knowledge and love of God and love of holiness, which were designed to govern, and did govern the natural ones, until the moment of the fall.

In these consisted man's spiritual resemblance to God, or the image and likeness of God in which he was made.

In their right exercise consisted his righteousness, true holiness and happiness. These were the co-eval endowments of which I have spoken. I repeat, that they comprehended the knowledge and love of God, and fellowship with him, and the knowledge and use of language, being such as depended on God's immediate communications and influences, bestowed upon the original powers and susceptibilities of the spirit of man as it came out of the hands of its maker. Their continuance and enjoyment depended upon man's union and communion with God; and these depended on his preserving his allegiance to God as a moral subject of his government, in holy subordination and obedience to him.

These divine endowments and influences, co-entially bestowed, though withdrawn from man, and man's nature forsaken of them, human nature as before described, would be human nature still, man's nature as such being entire without them. The soul of man, when under the government and controul of these divine principles, the scriptures call *spirit*, in opposition to flesh as formerly explained. The intellectual and moral nature of man, or his understanding and affections may be governed by the one or by the other of these, and whichever of them has the mastery over and controuls the man, gives to him his moral character, either of religion and spiritual mindedness, or of irreligion and carnality.

The spiritual and superior principles, were given to possess the throne, and to maintain an absolute dominion in the heart, while the natural ones were given to be wholly subordinate and subservient. While things continued in this state, every thing was in excellent order; fellowship with God and love and happiness prevailed. This was the fruit of obedience under the covenant of innocence, under which God placed man, after making him in his own image and likeness. Obedience to the will of God was the dignity, true glory, security and happiness of man. Upon this, I repeat, depended the perpetuity of the image of God in which man was made, as did also his natural immortality and exemption from disease and pain. In this state, man could only be justified by his own works of righteousness in obeying the law of God, and preserving his innocence and purity. In this situation, religion, or the knowledge of God, was *natural* to man. It formed a part of the *state* in which man was made. The divine constitution, agreeably to which he was made and endowed, secured to him every thing that was necessary for his obedience, righteousness, holiness and happi-



ness, without any grace or favor, as it is revealed in the gospel. Man needed no Mediator, and there was none. In his understanding there was no darkness nor ignorance to the full extent or degree of the limits which God prescribed for his knowledge, duty and happiness. In his heart no passion touched a discordant string, but all was harmony and love.

By attending to the three first chapters of Genesis, we clearly see, that there was the most intimate and familiar intercourse between God and man. This was kept up and manifested by oral and verbal communications. They talked together — Adam received, by words, communications from his Maker, and he understood them and spoke to him in an articulate, vocal manner. Verbal language or speech was the medium of communication between God and man before the fall, as it ever has been, through an atonement and a mediator, since the fall.

I will now attend to man's probation or trial under the covenant of innocence, his temptation and fall, and the consequences of it.

After God created man in his image and likeness, he put him in a state of probation, as he seems to have done all his intelligent creatures. He gave him dominion over all the things that he had created, except the fruit of one tree, and made him subject to himself only — he gave him also dominion over his own appetite, passions and actions. He formed him with appetites, and forbade him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden, as the test of his obedience. The penalty denounced against the violation of this prohibition, which was made in plain words and sentences, was *death* — “And the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden

thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," or dying thou shalt die: Gen. ii, 15, 17. This command and prohibition of God, and the penalty annexed to transgression, Adam and Eve understood, as appears from what afterwards occurred. In this case, God did all that he could do, that was consistent with his character and agency as the moral Governor of man, and with man's agency as a subject of God's government, in a state of probation, to prevent man's fall. When God declared to man that he *should not eat*, he did not mean that he *might eat* with his permission. But man did eat, and thereby *sinned*, by *transgressing* God's law or will. He sinned by *withdrawing his attention from the word of God and its authority*, by which he was *prohibited* and *not allowed* or *permitted to eat*, and by attending to, and *acquiescing in the tempter's contradiction of God's word, by which he made God a liar, and by yielding to the influence of his carnal appetite, imagination and passion, in opposition to it*: — or, in other words, he sinned by yielding obedience to the inferior carnal principles, *the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, in direct violation of God's will and law, clearly expressed and understood, and in opposition to the superior principles of his nature*. Before he sinned, and while in the image of God, man saw as God saw, he loved as God loved, and he willed as God willed. He corresponded in these respects, to the extent of his limited divine endowments and exercises, with his maker.

The *internal states* of the mind are formed and regulated very much by the external perceptions of the mind, and the bearing which the objects have upon its passions and gratifications; and the rule of duty and of conscience

is often violated by imagination and passion, excited by external objects of sense. This was clearly the case in the fall of man. The tempter began his work of ruin in Eden, by making a false representation of the word of God to the mind of man, by which he perverted his intellect; and he completed it by falsely clothing the forbidden tree with qualities, and the eating of it with advantages and benefits, which inflamed his imagination and passions. Without these, the subtle deceiver well knew that he could not induce him to sin. "And the Serpent said unto the woman, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the Garden? And the woman said unto the Serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the Garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the Garden, God hath said ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die—for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat:" Gen. iii, 1, 6. It was by false words, in opposition, and in contradiction to the true word of God, that the mind of man in its perceptions ceased to harmonise with the mind of God, and his affections and will were put in opposition to God, and by a decisive choice, in accordance with the false suggestions of the Devil, and his animal appetite and carnal imagination, he sinned against God. Releasing his mind from a sense of the truth and obligation of God's word, by withdrawing his *attention* from it, and by attending to and becoming engrossed by the suggestions of the tempter, which he did voluntarily, and in

violation of God's will and his duty and ability, man had nothing to oppose or controul his carnal appetite and passion, and was of necessity precipitated into transgression. He ceased to use the power that God gave to him to stand, and he fell. And thus he separated himself from God by sin. By this he lost his union and fellowship with God, extinguished his love in his own soul, and lost the image and likeness of God in which he was made, and incurred his displeasure and all the penalties of the violated law.

Man, with the powers God gave him, could have continued his attention to what God said to him, and could have continued to believe, feel and obey it, in opposition to what Satan said; but he did not, and sinned.

“Attention is the *looking organ* of the mind — the link of connection between man's moral nature and his intellectual nature — the messenger as it were, by which the interchange between these two departments is carried on — a messenger, too, at the bidding of the *will*, which sayeth to it at one time, go, and it goeth — at another time, come, and it cometh — and again: do this, and it doeth it. It is thus that a man becomes directly responsible for the conclusions of his understanding: for these conclusions depend altogether, not on the evidence which exists, but on that portion of the evidence which is attended to. He is reckoned with for the lack or sufficiency of his attention, and not for the lack or sufficiency of evidence. It is not for him to create the light of day, but it is for him to open and present his eyes to all its manifestations. Neither is it for him to fetch down to earth the light from the upper sanctuary. But if it be indeed true, that light hath come from thence, then it is for him to guide the eye of the understanding towards it.” \*

\* Dr. Chalmers.

In consequence of man's transgression his state was totally changed; God withdrew from him, because it would have been utterly improper in itself, and inconsistent with the covenant or constitution he had established with him in innocence, that he should have still maintained communion with him, after he had sinned and become a rebel. When God withdrew his complacential smiles and spiritual light and influence, he left man possessed of the inferior and carnal principles, and involved in spiritual darkness, guilt and death, to realize the penalty denounced against transgression, dying thou shalt die, in the day thou eatest.

The intellectual powers and moral principles, which were essential to man's existence, as an intelligent being, continued, but the co-eval endowments, which constituted the image of God, ceased, and man became flesh and naturally mortal; and religion ceased to be natural to man's state; that is, the knowledge and love of God and of spiritual things ceased to be natural as they had been. As, when the light is withdrawn from a room, it is left in darkness, so the withdrawal from man of God's spiritual manifestations, and the co-eval spiritual endowment which he bestowed upon him in consequence of sin, left him in spiritual darkness under the dominion of sense and of animal appetite and passion — a sensual, selfish being, involved in guilt, and under the sentence of death.

It was on account of man's change from God, and God's withdrawal from him, that religion, which was natural to his first pure estate, ceased to be natural to his fallen state.

The religion-giving manifestations and operations of God, which were natural to man while he possessed the image and likeness of God, were withdrawn; but the natural presence and physical operations of God's spirit, were

not withdrawn from him. These do not give religion, nor religious and spiritual knowledge. Had these ceased with the withdrawal of God's religion-giving manifestations and endowments, man would have instantly died a natural death, and the human race become extinct. If the *natural and immediate presence and physical operations of God's spirit, had been the religion-giving and the religion-sustaining operations in the soul, man could not have sinned, and all men would naturally, and necessarily have religion*, and they would all have it precisely alike, because all men are made alike, and these operations are alike, and common to all men, and are necessary to their existence. They sustain natural life, and all the native, intellectual and moral powers and susceptibilities of man, which survived the fall, and which render him *capable* of religion; but the religion-giving operations of God's spirit, which enlighten and improve his capacity, are by external supernatural revelations, made in intelligible words and sentences, and which have for the most part been illustrated and confirmed by miraculous works.

These words and works, since immediate supernatural revelations and miraculous works ceased, are embodied in the written oracles of God, and are the ordained means by which spiritual ideas are produced in the mind of man, and, under the gospel, are the means by which man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. I have said, that God did all that he could do, consistently with the moral nature of his government, to prevent man from sinning. In reference to the whole matter he might well have said, after man sinned: "What could have been done more to man that I have not done to and for him? Wherefore, when I looked that he should have been obedient and produced righteousness, he was disobedient." It is true that God *could* have prevented Adam

eating of the forbidden tree in various *physical* ways. He could have placed it out of his reach, or he could have given him an *instinctive* abhorrence of the tree, but in this he would not have acted as the *moral* governor of man, and in that case there would have been no need of any prohibition.

When, man sinned by the misuse and abuse of his moral powers, God did not infuse any positive principle of corruption or sin into his soul. He withdrew from him, and, agreeably to man's own choice, he left him under the influence and controul of the inferior principles of time and sense, and animal appetite, involved in spiritual darkness and guilt, and under the sentence of death. In this state of sin, immediately after man fell, he had no power to choose life or to reject it; because it was not put in his power. Until God spoke to him and gave him a promise, there was none to choose, or refuse, or hope for. I repeat, that God did not *permit* or *allow* Adam and Eve to eat of the forbidden tree—he did not permit them to sin in any sense that indicates his acquiescence or approval. Had this been the case, the essence of sin would have been wanting in the act of eating; it could not have been transgression of God's will and law for them to have eaten. The whole transaction is destitute of every appearance of permission or acquiescence on the part of God. Adam and Eve never once thought of it, nor did the Devil, which they certainly would have done had it been true, when God pronounced sentence upon them — when he said unto Adam, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof *I commanded* thee that thou *shouldest not eat?* and the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat;" — and when the woman said, "The Serpent beguiled me and I did eat:" Gen. iii, 11, 13. I repeat, that Adam, who was made in the im-

age and likeness of God, and who knew at least as much as our modern philosophers know of the divine mind in reference to God's will concerning himself, never once thought that God permitted him or Eve to sin; and God, in the sentence he pronounced against them, and the consequences that followed, gave awful proof of his infinite and eternal opposition to sin. The divine permission of sin, is asserted to suit certain human theories and systems of physical theology, which men have formed independent of the word, and, in many things, in opposition to it. Had God never spoken to man after he sinned, or had he made no new communications to him, his mind would have of necessity been limited in its knowledge to the *remembrance* of spiritual things, which he knew before. But God had designs of mercy and grace, and, in reference to the incarnation of the Word, his atonement and salvation through him, manifested them. These were progressively developed through different ages, until they were perfected by Jesus Christ in the Gospel. By this Gospel man is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him. The principles by which this renewal is effected, are to be found in the gracious provisions in *the new covenant* through the offices and agencies of Jesus Christ as the *new* Creator. These secure to the true believer in Jesus Christ, the remission of his sins, through the redemption there is in his blood, by the free grace of God and a new nature, and fellowship with the Father and the Son, and eternal glory.

The greatest part of the christian world are Natural-Religionists, who differ nothing from those who call themselves *Deists*, in the sentiment that nature indicates or teaches the existence of God, independent of any revelation. In this case they both deny that the revealed word of God is the means of original spiritual ideas and know-



ledge. The natural-religionist christian, with the Deist, moreover believes, that the word of God was originally in its nouns, verbs and adjectives, of human invention and stipulation, as the ideas and objects which they express, were of human discovery, and that they became, or were made the word of God only by his using them in speaking to man. These opinions are in direct opposition to what I believe to be true, and to the views given in this and in the former Essay. I consider them to be not only essentially erroneous and false, but to involve consequences which are fatal to the consistency and practical belief of the Gospel, or the christian religion, as they are subversive of the whole word of God. They, of necessity, have led to unscriptural views of the operations of the Spirit in giving religion, as they have to the denial and rejection of an essential truth in the fall and depravity of man:—I mean the loss of the knowledge of God.

The doctrine that asserts that religion is *natural* to the fallen state of man, was incorporated into the Christian religion in the second or third century, by Clement of Alexandria, and was derived from the Platonic philosophy, which was taught by Plato more than three hundred years before Christ. That philosophy taught the doctrine of innate ideas.

John Calvin taught natural religion as the foundation of all religion, and maintained it as a self-evident truth, that all men have an innate knowledge of God, and of spiritual things. This appears from his Institutes. The doctrine of innate ideas and of innate knowledge continued through every period of the christian religion, from the days of Clement, and formed an essential part of it, down to the time of Locke, who exploded it in a great degree. But the effects of that doctrine have been more or less retained in the systems of the christian sects, and are now seen in

their creeds and confessions of faith, and in other printed books on religion.

The doctrine of innate ideas derived from Plato, was incorporated with the christian religion and systematised in the third century by Origen, and is called Platonie christianity.

This doctrine of the innate knowledge of God, and the doctrine that religion is given by the immediate inspirations and operations of God's spirit, without his word since his immediate revelations and inspirations ceased, have been, and are, at the foundation of all the errors that exist in the theories, systems and philosophy of religion, deistical and christian, of the present age.

The entire fallacy of these doctrines, and their perverting, corrupting and destroying effects of Gospel truth, can, I think, be made manifest; and my desire to make them so, induces me to institute an investigation of them in the form of a dialogue, to be conducted by a Deist, a Calvinistical Christian Philosopher, and a Christian. Each of them will defend his own peculiar views and sentiments, as far as the origin of religion, or of the knowledge of God, and the origin and use of language, in words and sentences as connected with that knowledge, are concerned. Deist will deny the necessity of a revelation in words altogether, in order to know God or to have religion. The Calvinistical Christian Philosopher will defend natural religion too with the Deist, and deny that revelation is necessary to the knowledge of God and of divine things, to a limited extent, but will agree that it is necessary to the knowledge of God's gospel character. Christian will deny that it is possible in the present state of man, to know or to learn that there is a God at all, who exists distinct from, and independent of nature, or the things that are seen, or that it is possible to know that any thing

ever was created or began from nothing, without revelation. By revelation he will mean a supernatural communication, or communications made by God in words, and illustrated and confirmed by miraculous works, by which the human mind alone can obtain the idea or knowledge of objective spiritual existences. Christain will defend the views given in the former and present Essay, and will maintain that the word of God, the history of the world, the philosophy of nature, including the human mind, and every man's own consciousness when truly regarded, justify the sentiment, that religion, or the knowledge of God to the present fallen state of man, is not natural, but supernatural and miraculous; and that the revealed word of God is now the only divinely appointed means of imparting to the human mind, the idea or the knowledge of the existence of God, the fact of creation and the existence of spiritual beings, who have no *perceived sensible* connection with matter and its laws.

By this investigation it will be seen, that Deists and Natural-Religionist christians deny that God is, in the strict scriptural use of the term, an object of faith, or that the fact of the creation of the world is. By denying that the fall of man lost for him the image and likeness of God, in which he was made, which included the knowledge of God, they deny the necessity of the atonement, and of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the mediation of Christ under the new covenant, with their appropriate effects, offices and agencies, in restoring that image and likeness of God, comprehending the knowledge and love of him. While it is a fact, that shall be proven, that all the divine communications and revelations which have been made to our world since man fell, of a religious nature, have been made in reference to and in consequence of the vicarious sufferings and propitiatory death

of Jesus Christ, and have been made by the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and all that has been known has been derived from this source.

There has been but one true system of religion in our world since man sinned in Eden, and that was revealed. All the rest have been false, and have been corruptions of the true one. That true system passed through various stages and degrees of development, through the long period of four thousand years, and was perfected by Jesus Christ in the Gospel, and is intended to bring this world, by its light and power, under his government, as Lord of all. But this cannot be done until all the erroneous and false lights are extinguished, and the world is brought to behold *the true light, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, by which alone man can be renewed in the image of God.*

## DIALOGUE I.

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### NATURAL RELIGION INVESTIGATED.

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Natural religion investigated — The knowledge of God is not derived from nature — There is no Deism or Natural Religion; and no innate knowledge of God, as was maintained by Calvin.

DEIST. — Gentlemen, our world is very much divided and agitated on the subject of religion. The peace and harmony of our own neighbours are very much injured by it. Is there no remedy for these evils; or are we doomed to perpetual strife on account of religion?

CALVINIST. — These things are the consequences of human depravity, and can find no remedy but in the sovereign grace of God.

DEIST. — Your remedy seems to me to be the very cause of the disease. The people who you say are the subjects of God's grace, and talk most about human depravity, are the fomenters and agitators of the strife, and evince often more depravity and corruption than other people do. I have known many peaceable, kind citizens, who seemed to be humble, benevolent and charitable to their neighbours, before they professed religion and joined a church, afterwards become unkind and censorious, and manifest a spirit of persecution and slander. Indeed the most bloody persecutions that have ever fouled and disgraced the name of humanity, have been perpetrated by professed christians, and to promote christianity. There

has been no persecution of christians in christendom, except *by christians*, for the last fifteen hundred years.

CHRISTIAN. — It is true that all christendom is agitated by religious sects, and divisions, and dreadful persecutions have been perpetrated by professed christians against each other, and these are, and have been the effects of human depravity, which have no remedy but in the grace of God. But I fear, Calvinist, that God's method of imparting that grace to the human heart, is greatly misapprehended and corrupted. The christian religion, which is a divine supernatural system of grace and truth, in its own appropriate operations and effects, never did, and never can produce pride, unkindness, or persecution. You see its proper nature and character manifested in the doctrines and life of Christ and the Apostles.

This religion understood, believed and practised, will purify our world, and produce union, peace and happiness in the human family.

DEIST. — I do not believe in your supernatural christian religion. I am a *natural religionist*, and derive all my religion from *nature*, which is the religion of philosophy.

CALVINIST. — I profess to be a natural religionist too, but I believe also in the christian religion; but this "is hid from the wise and prudent and is revealed unto babes."

There are two kinds of religion in the world, which are taught by all orthodox divines in our theological schools, and out of them. The first is commonly called natural religion, by which is meant, that knowledge of God which we derive from ourselves, and from the appearances and operations of nature without any revelation. This religion is altogether independent of the second kind, which is called revealed religion, and is the foundation of it.

The second kind of religion is termed revealed religion, because it is supernatural, and makes known the moral character of God more fully than natural religion does. It moreover clearly reveals the salvation of sinners in the gospel, and is that which by the power of God converts sinners.

DEIST. — I cannot say any thing in favor of your supernaturally revealed religion, because I do not believe it. I will leave that for Christians to fight about, as they ever have done, and to settle. They say that it is the immediate gift of God, and has nothing to do with reason, or reason with it; the latter of which I believe. Supernaturally revealed religion is properly the religion of the unlettered and ignorant portions of society, and is only suited for *babes* and *novices*, to the exclusion of "*the wise and prudent.*" But natural religion is the religion of the Philosopher, and properly belongs to philosophy, and to men of learning and science — to the wise and prudent. With this religion I profess to be acquainted, and am prepared to defend it.

When mankind shall have been improved and elevated by the knowledge of this, divisions and strife will cease, and peace and friendship will prevail. I call this *natural revelation*, because it is revealed by nature to the Philosophic mind. In *this sense*, there is no man that believes in revealed religion stronger than I do, but it is not the reveries of the Old Testament, or of the New, or of the Koran, that I dignify with that sacred title. That which is revelation to me, consists in something which no human mind can invent, and no human hand can counterfeit. Mine is the earlier, unsophisticated, universal revelation. Creation and nature which we behold, and which every body can see, are the word of God. This word of God reveals to all men who are capable of reading it, all that

is necessary for man to know of his Creator. Do we then want to know what God is? Search, not the book called the Scriptures, which any human mind might have formed, or any impostor have invented, but search the book called nature, and her laws. This is no counterfeit production of ignorance or knavery, or both, as is your Bible, and which ought to be rejected as a solemn imposture. Cultivate nature and follow her suggestions and dictates, and she will teach you all that you can know of God, and will guide you to heaven.

CHRISTIAN. — I am not displeased with the frankness with which you have expressed yourself, but feel greatly afflicted that your ignorance and impiety should have been thus manifested. Your *natural religion* is nothing more than a plagiarism from the revealed word of God, which you so much deride, as far as the idea of God and of Creation are concerned. I agree with you, that that which is revelation in religion, consists in something which no human mind can invent, and no human hand can counterfeit. This I assert is precisely true in regard to the religion of the Bible, and of the knowledge of the being of God as the Creator of the world. Without supernatural revelation in words, illustrated and confirmed by miraculous works, the fact of the existence of God and of other spiritual beings, who exist distinct from, and independent of sensible nature, and of nature's laws and powers, and the fact of creation, could not be known to man in his present state. Divine revelation was the earlier, unsophisticated source of religious and spiritual knowledge, and your natural religion is nothing more than a counterfeit production.

Divine revelation has been handed down by tradition, and has been transmitted in some form or other, to every age and portion of the human family, where the idea of



God has existed. In its progress it has undergone many changes and corruptions; I therefore insist upon it, that your natural religion or deism, which you Deists and Calvinists defend, has been derived from divine revelation, and is a corruption of it, and in your own language, Deist, is "a counterfeit production, of error, ignorance, or knavery, or all united, and ought to be rejected as a solemn imposture." It has done more to pervert the human mind, and to strengthen its corruptions, and to nullify the word of God, and prevent mankind receiving it *as the word of God*, than all other causes united together. In the hands of those christian teachers who profess to believe in natural religion, it has involved christianity itself in the most glaring absurdities and contradictions. To the extent it operates, it supersedes the word of God as the means of the knowledge of spiritual and divine things, as it is the means of faith; and when a sinner is converted, it makes his conversion to depend upon the immediate physical operations of the spirit, and not upon the *belief* of the truth. God has never spoken to our world since it first sinned against him, but in language, which was in strict accordance with man's fallen, corrupt, guilty, and ignorant state, and in reference to his purpose of grace and mercy given to us in Christ Jesus, and all the religion that is in the world was originally derived from his revelation.

As I desire this subject to be thoroughly investigated, I wish you to read with care the two essays which precede this conversation. This will save us much repetition, and lead us directly into the merits of the investigation. I repeat that there is no such thing as natural religion, no idea or knowledge of God without revelation in words; this revelation has always been made in reference to the atonement of Jesus Christ, and by the Trinity.

CALVINIST.—This is all passing strange to me. Can

it be possible that all the good and great men have been mistaken? Surely it cannot. John Calvin was esteemed an orthodox divine. He believed, as much as any man can do, in the doctrines of grace and in human depravity, and its consequences, and he was a great natural-religionist. He believed that man has *naturally* knowledge sufficient, but that his *heart* is corrupt; his disposition is wrong.

CHRISTIAN.—If you will examine Calvin's views, as they are connected with natural religion, you will find them essentially deistical. He maintained the doctrine of innate ideas, and denied that sin lost for man the knowledge of God—he denies virtually that God is an *object of faith*, in the scriptural use of the term. Heb. xi, 1.

CALVINIST.—Permit me to exhibit a few extracts from Calvin's Institutes. The principles expressed in them form a part of almost all protestant creeds and confessions, and are found in almost all the systematic writers on theology.

In the third chapter of the first vol. of the Institutes, entitled, "the human mind naturally endowed with the knowledge of God," he observes: "We lay it down as a proposition not to be controverted, that the human mind, even by natural instinct, possesses some sense of Deity, the obliteration of which is more difficult than a total change of the whole disposition. \* \* \* It will always be evident to persons of correct judgment, that the idea of a Deity impressed on the mind of man, is indelible. That all have by nature an innate persuasion of the divine existence, a persuasion inseparable from their very constitution, we have abundant evidence."

"Whence we infer that this is a doctrine not first to be learnt in the schools, but which every man from his birth is self taught. Men need not go out of themselves pro-

vided they do not, by arrogating to themselves what is given from Heaven, smother the light which illuminates their minds, to a clear discovery of God." He also speaks of "the seeds of divinity sown in the nature of man." Again he observes, "as the perfection of a happy life consists in the knowledge of God, that no man might be precluded from attaining felicity, God hath not only sown in the minds of men the seeds of religion already mentioned, but hath manifested himself in the formation of every part of the world, and daily presents himself to public view in such a manner, that they cannot open his eyes without being constrained to behold him. The Lord abundantly manifests his wisdom to every individual on earth, who is furnished with no other assistance than their own eyes. Such a knowledge ought not only to excite us to the worship of God, but likewise to awaken and arouse us to the hope of future life."

These are the views of Calvin on the subject of natural religion. The Westminster and Baptist confessions of faith also declare, that "the very light of nature, in man, and the works of God declare plainly, that there is a God." To the same purpose I might quote learned and pious men, in every age; such as Barrow, Butler, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Dr. S. Clarke, and Dr. A. Clarke, Doddridge, Macknight, and Dwight. *We are required to believe in the existence of God, but we do not go to the Bible for proof of this great doctrine. It is pre-supposed from the very nature of things.*

DEIST. — Calvin was a much greater philosopher than I had supposed him to be. Christians you see go to the Bible for *the rule of faith*, as they call it, but they derive *faith itself* from the light of nature. How much more reasonable are these views of Calvin than are those of *revealed religion*, which involve all the revolting absurdities,

perplexities and mysticisms that belong to the doctrine of your Bible, including the vicarious sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, or the atonement as you call it, and of the remission of sin through his blood, and of a Mediator, and of a Trinity, or three gods in one God. Of what use I ask you, is what you call the written word of God, and which is derived from, and based upon the religion of nature, as you have allowed, Calvinist, to a mind which possesses from nature the ideas and knowledge which Calvin has described, "such a knowledge as ought not only to excite us to the worship of God, but likewise to awake and arouse us to the hope of future life?" What is the use of your *rule* of faith, about which Protestants, and Papists contend so much, as derived from God by a supernatural revelation, when all agree that we possess the knowledge of God, and of faith itself, without any supernatural revelation from God? In comparison to the religious knowledge derived from nature, your christian religion is as a lighted taper to the sun. And there is about as much use for it, to an enlightened mind, enlightened by natural science, in order to the knowledge of God, as there is for a lighted taper at noon day, to discover visible objects by. We need no revelation to make that known which we are informed of by nature; nor do we need any immediate miraculous operations of God, to produce or excite feelings which relate to God, or to naturally visible things, that are excited by the qualities of objects perceived by nature. This is a plain common-sense truth, that men practice upon, and acknowledge every day in the ordinary pursuits of life.

The various devices and means which christians employ to conceal the absurdities of their systems, to blind their own minds, and impose upon the ignorance and credulity of others, are truly remarkable. The Papists prac-

tice a hundred mummeries and nonsensical ceremonies, to advance their superstition and idolatry, and to perpetuate their despotism over the human mind. They claim the right, the exclusive right and authority, and the power to do these things from Peter, by divine appointment. The Protestant sects allow their people to read the scriptures, which is forbidden by the Papists, but deny that they can derive any light from them, without some immediate miraculous operation. They address the imaginations and passions of the people, and get up protracted and big meetings, and camp meetings, and anxious seats, by which they excite their fears, imaginations and passions, and render them credulous to what they say—all the emotions and sensations that are felt on these occasions, are ascribed to the immediate power of God, and the people believe it, and are induced to join the parties by which they have accidentally been excited. And in this way they strengthen their sectarian armies. The way by which this business is managed, is the following: the leaders will not allow to mankind, any native religious susceptibilities of mind, which may be acted upon, and excited and improved by *natural religious* objects, because this would subvert all the pretensions and claims they set up to the immediate distinguishing and special favour of the Almighty, which they think are manifested by the excitements and feelings they experience, to the exclusion of others, while they allow men to have natural religion, such as Calvin has described. Whitefield and Wesley were master spirits in this business, particularly the former, as many men are in this age.

Calvin's views of natural religion, as quoted by Calvinist, sweep away at one stroke all these impositions and absurdities. To allow to man natural powers and susceptibilities for religion, and to nature the power of improv-

ing them into natural religion, as Calvinist has done, and then to deny that their revealed religion has any power, or fitness in it to excite the mind, or the mind any power or susceptibility to be enlightened and excited by it, is an absurdity too glaring to escape the notice of any man whose mind is not blinded by ignorance or prejudice, and is an acknowledgment that revealed religion has no claims upon the notice and regard of the rational powers of men as we find them. It proves that their revealed religion is untrue. While the history and the present state of the idolatrous world prove natural religion true. There is not a heathen nation upon earth that does not possess and manifest original native powers and susceptibilities, as well for religion as for other things — man would be a clod without them. Their existence is essential to the constitution and being of the human mind. The manner and the order of the exercise and improvement of the mind in religion, and in every thing else, are regulated by these laws and principles, or faculties of the mind; and the objects and systems by which it is influenced, give character to it, whether they be true or false. The truth of these remarks is illustrated and confirmed, by the different manners and customs which distinguish different nations from each other, and by the present state of the various and opposing sects, as well among idolaters, as among christians.

I ask your pardon, gentlemen! perhaps I have spoken too freely in the views that I have given. I have acted thus, because I supposed that you desired and designed to have a free investigation, marked with great frankness and candor.

The truth is, that there is an utter inconsistency, and repugnancy, between natural religion and revealed religion, both in relation to the objects of them, and in their

connection with the mind, and in the faculties and powers of the mind, by which they are professed to be perceived, believed and felt. The former are *natural*, and are *perceived* to be connected with the mind by nature, and they are perceived, understood and believed and felt by the natural powers, faculties and susceptibilities of the mind. The latter are *supernatural* or *imaginary*—they have no *naturally* perceived connection with the mind by nature, and they are not perceived, understood, believed or felt, by the natural faculties, powers and susceptibilities of mind, but by superinduced powers and affections by the immediate power of God.

All men have the former religion naturally, and until they are by one way and another, deprived of common sense and reason, and made to believe, like the Shakers and Mormonites, that they have new and immediate divine revelations, and operations, they cannot receive the latter.

CHRISTIAN.—You see now, Calvinist, a plain statement of the inconsistency there is between your natural religion, and your revealed religion. One or the other is false. I maintain, that natural religion is false, or is a corruption of revealed religion, and was originally borrowed from it, and cannot exist without it. However offensive and revolting it may seem to you, Deist, and to other natural-religionists, I affirm, that without the *fact* of the *Atonement* and the *Trinity*, and their *effects*, there is no religion in the world.

I desire a free and full discussion of this subject, and therefore wish you to use the utmost liberty of remark that is consistent with good decorum, and a proper regard for christian feelings. Protracted meetings do not of necessity involve the evils of which you speak. Your quotations from Calvin's Institutes, Calvinist, prove what I alleged of him. He firmly believed in the doctrine of innate

ideas, or of innate religion; a doctrine which early christians derived from the philosophy of Plato, a leading principle in which, Mosheim informs us, was, that "the divine nature is diffused through all the human soul, and that the faculty of reason is an emanation of God into the human soul, and comprehends in it the principles and elements of all truth, human and divine. With this view originated the doctrine of innate ideas." This doctrine has been long since exploded by Locke, but its effects and consequences, have been retained by Papists and Protestants, under various notions, and are found in the various systems of this age, and must be exploded before the Word of God, *as the word of God, can have free course to be glorified.*

For my views of the subject look back into the first Essay. I concede to the human mind, original native powers and susceptibilities, which survived the fall, and which render man capable of acquiring from supernatural revelation the knowledge of God and religion, and which are improvable in spiritual things, by the word of God; but I deny that religious knowledge and affection, are natural to man's present state, or that he can acquire the idea of God, the knowledge of whose existence is the basis of all religion, or the idea of a creation, or of the fact of a creation without supernatural revelation made in words and miraculous works. And I assert, that since immediate supernatural revelations ceased in words and miraculous works, the human mind has been, by divine constitution and appointment, or by fixed laws of its nature, limited to God's written word, and to the traditions of his word, in acquiring the idea of God, and of religious knowledge. If this be true, then all the true knowledge of God that has existed, and does exist in the world, has been, and is derived from God's revealed word as the means of spiritual ideas, and all the erroneous and false



knowledge has been the effect of perverting or corrupting that word. It will moreover follow, that Natural religion, or Deism, for which you both contend, is false, and that the Christian religion, embracing the Atonement and the Trinity, is the perfection of all former revelations, and that all that either of you know of God, or spiritual things, you are in truth and in fact dependent upon the word of God for. In this investigation there can be no difficulty; if you have arrived at the knowledge of God, and of a creation, from or by nature, you can easily show me the process or rational procedure by which you did so. Do this truly, and I will yield the subject of investigation in favour of natural religion; and if you cannot, you must yield it in favour of Christianity. You must take nothing for granted that is not self-evident in this investigation, and I will assume and concede nothing. I am thus particular, because things operate upon the mind in matters of religion, not as they are in themselves, but as the mind perceives them. I desire you to see and receive the word of God, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth and indeed, the Word of God, that it may effectually work in you. When you shall *thus believe it*, you will need no other faculties and susceptibilities than those you possess, as *native faculties and powers*, and which are essential to the existence of your mind, and are by their divine constitution, improvable by the Gospel into spiritual discernment, and spiritual mindedness. The mind, by its nature and constitution, derives its character from the things it believes and practises, as well in religion as in other things. This is the reason of the diversities that exist in religious characters.

Should it turn out that all that we know, or can know of God, and that our faith, and hope, and love, and religious activity, and enjoyment, are derived from revela-

tion, and are produced by it, then the long controversy will be ended about free agency, and free will in religion, and the gift of faith, etc. as it will be settled that God gives us all these *by* and *through* his word. The necessity of using the word of God as a school book in the cultivation of the youthful mind, in intellectual and moral learning and improvements, as well as in religion, will also be established, as will the duty and privilege of all men to be christians, and of christians to be more spiritual and holy than they are.

DEIST. — I readily grant that if I cannot arrive at the knowledge of God from nature, there is no natural religion, and I shall be obliged to give it up. And should your views on the subject be true, they will introduce a new epoch in religion and morals, which will give to the Bible a divine certainty and importance, which are not realized, or even thought of, or believed by any christian sect in christendom, notwithstanding the great noise that is made in behalf of the Bible.

You will indeed make it a school book and a classic in every grade of education, from the Nursery to the University, and prove it to be absolutely necessary to the civilization of the world; for without the knowledge of God, man must be savage. In that case, it will be impossible to exaggerate the importance or the value of the Bible, and of Bible societies; and all christians must be one, who do indeed take the Bible for their religion.

But I cannot give up natural religion, and will proceed to show the process by which, without revelation in words, I arrive at the knowledge of God, and of a Creation. I have two ways by which I do this, which are short and easy.

The first is from effect to cause. The second is from the appearances of design and contrivance in the forma-

tion of the world. In these I omit the argument derived from analogy, for the reasons assigned in the first Essay; because the object of comparison in analogical reasoning, must be discovered and known before it can be compared. My first process is to reason from effect to cause. I see that the world exists. It could not have existed forever, and therefore, it must have had a beginning. It could not have created itself, and must therefore have had a Creator. This Creator I call God. In all this, I have had nothing to do with revelation, or revelation with me, further than *nature* is concerned.

My second process is the following: Every thing in the world is, from its nature and fitness in the great system of things, suited to answer particular purposes and ends. This indicates design and wisdom. The various parts thus formed and qualified, could not have come into existence, or have placed themselves in the system by accident, or chance. I therefore infer, that there was a wise *designer* who made them, and organized the system in all its parts. This designer or maker, I again call God.

Thus you see how very easy it is to prove the existence of God, without supernatural revelation, which has been done a hundred times before by Deists and Natural-religionist christian philosophers. I have had nothing to do with a revelation, or with the atonement of Jesus Christ, or the Trinity, or a Mediator. These are things which have nothing to do with *pure theism*, which is the religion of philosophers, as was fairly evinced by the quotations from Calvin's Institutes.

CHRISTIAN. — After reading over carefully the first Essay again, you cannot say that you have acted philosophically, or logically, in either of your attempts to prove from nature, the existence of God. In both cases you have begged the question, as all Deists and Natural-religionists

have done before you. In laying down your premises, you have taken for granted, what the argument required you to prove. I assert that without revelation we do not know, and cannot find out the beginning or the *creation* of any thing from nothing. I therefore, in the absence of revelation, deny that there ever was the creation of any thing from nothing; or that you can have any idea of it; or that material nature ever had a beginning of either its substances, or laws and powers; and without a beginning you have no need of a beginner or a designer. I deny that the abstract existence of any thing proves or indicates that it ever began. If it does so, then, admit that God exists, it proves that he had a beginning as truly and logically as that any thing else had.

I grant that every effect must have a cause, but in this argument, in the absence of revelation, I deny that the existence of the world of nature is an effect. or that it ever was produced from nothing. Do order, harmony and fitness, necessarily indicate the beginning of that in which they exist? If they do, then, admitting the existence of God, order, harmony and fitness, in his nature and attributes, indicate that he began. Order, harmony and fitness, in the universe, abstractly considered, without revelation, prove nothing more than that they exist, and all that can be learnt from them, are, the laws and principles by which they are preserved. It is *by faith*, or by revelation, that we know that God is, and that the worlds were created by the word of God. When *thus known as a Creation*, "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work." Natural experience and observation teach us, that out of nothing, nothing is produced. God is an *object of faith*, so is the *fact* of creation. Objects of faith are made known by revelation — by supernatural revelation in words, and not by natural

appearances. In both of your attempts to show the existence of God, you have employed and used the ideas and the words of revelation, or you could not have had one thought upon the subject, or have used a single word.

DEIST. — Permit me to try again. The medical world believes in the existence of a particular poison, called Marsh Miasmata, yet by none of our senses is this substance perceived. Its effects alone in the production of disease testify its existence. The same may be said of the deleterious agents which are productive of influenza, measles, small-pox, cholera, etc. From their effects alone do we derive our knowledge of them. Nor do we ask for the aid of revelation on the subject. The same is true with respect to gravitation, electricity, magnetism, caloric, and even the principle of vitality. We have no sense to take immediate cognizance of these subtle matters — we simply witness in nature around us, their uniform effects. That these effects have some cause, we are compelled by the constitution of our intellects to believe, for man is essentially inclined to researches in causality. We inquire after causes, and not being able to find them among *visible* agents, we consider them as *invisible*, and attach to them for their designation, the foregoing names. In all this there is no revelation in words.

Lest you should not be satisfied with these examples and proofs, permit me to exhibit another proof by which I can arrive at the idea of God without a supernatural revelation.

In contemplating the works of nature, I discover a phenomenon, or appearance, for which by the utmost stretch of thought, I cannot account, through the influence of natural laws, or of any natural agent. I run over all the properties of matter that are known to me, and find them insufficient for the solution of the difficulty. Yet the phe-

nomenon is an effect, and as such, must have a cause. At once, therefore, I fancy a cause, and immediately adopt it as an object of belief. This cause is something invisible, different from matter, possessing higher power than matter, placed even beyond the bourne of what I mean by the term *nature*. I therefore consider it supernatural, and denominate it *spirit*. In this process of investigation, the number of spiritual beings supposed to be discovered, will be in the inverse ratio of the intelligence of the discoverer. The Philosopher will find but few, and they will be great. Their influence will be extensive, and their action will be powerful. They will be, according to circumstances, Demi-gods or Gods. The Philosopher, by pushing this inquiry to the requisite extent, widening progressively the sphere of his observations, generalizing as he advances, on an ampler scale, and embracing in his view the unbroken uniformity that pervades creation, and the boundless power and wisdom that mark the movements and economy of the universe — by proceeding thus, he arrives at length at a belief in the existence of *one supreme — all powerful and wise, the God at once of the Philosopher and the Christian*.

Here you perceive that there is no revelation in words and sentences, nor is any necessary. Here is no primitive invention of names to serve as means to conduct us to a knowledge of substances or things, to which they are to be *afterwards* attached, as their appellatives. No: we first discover the *things*, and *then name them* — we discover them, as Calvin said, by looking *at nature*, and into our own minds.

CHRISTIAN. — I have now, I suppose, your entire system of reasoning by which you profess to arrive at the knowledge of God. I must repeat my regret, that you had not read more carefully the first Essay. Do exam-

ine it again. I have in that, anticipated all that you have said, and have shown that it is utterly inapplicable to the object you designed it for. *Natural experience and observation* teach you nothing beyond the objects of sense, and the powers of nature, by which natural appearances are produced.

In matters of natural science I grant that *things* must be first known, or discovered, before *names* can be invented and attached to them, as their appellatives. Natural things, however, are known by their natural phenomena, or sensible appearances. Without these they could not be discovered; and of course without them, names could not be invented and attached to them, as their appellations. Matters that are purely spiritual, have no *natural phenomena or appearances*, and of course they cannot be naturally known or discovered, and therefore names cannot be invented and attached to them by the human mind, from any thing that appears in nature. This is truly and properly the case with regard to God, and other spiritual existences which have no *perceived* sensible connection with the *objects* of nature. As they have no natural appearances by which their existence might be known or discovered, and names might be given to them, they must have been revealed by *supernatural* manifestations. These supernatural manifestations were made by God himself. Spiritual things were made known by their *names*, which God himself stipulated and established by frequent revelations, as their signs. The poisons which produce the diseases to which you have referred, are made known and discovered by their *sensible* phenomena or appearances, in their production of diseases. This is also true of the principle of gravitation and life—they are known by their sensible effects, none of which have any application to the subject now under discussion. As a Philosopher,

you are compelled to concede, that it is your duty and your province to explain natural effects by natural causes, and having arrived at ultimate or first principles, to stop, as they constitute the limits or boundary, beyond which, philosophy and science cannot go.

Were you perfectly acquainted with all the principles and laws of nature, by which all the phenomena or effects in nature are produced, no case of *ignorance* could occur, in reference to any phenomenon, such as you have supposed, which would *start your fancy*, in violation and in subversion of your philosophy and reason, to create demigods or gods to explain it. Every natural phenomenon, is explicable by natural laws, and leaves you involved in Atheism, without any suggestion of the existence of God, if you reject revelation. When natural science shall have been perfected, and every thing concerning the operations and laws of nature shall be known, and appropriate names be given to every thing discovered by natural phenomena, within the whole bounding circle of the *sensible* universe, there will be no *spiritual* idea, or thought, or word, if you exclude revelation. If supernatural revelation in words and miraculous works, be entirely excluded, God will not be known, because all natural effects are explicable by natural causes, and rise no higher than nature. For the knowledge of God and spiritual things, we are limited to the supernatural revelations of God, which have been made by words and by miraculous works, neither of which can, in the present advanced period of natural science, be explained by natural principles, either in regard to the inventions of the human mind, or the operations of nature, which sufficiently prove that religion is supernatural and miraculous to the present state of man, and could not have existed but by the direct and immediate agency of God. I have often heard it alledged by way of reproach to chris-



ianity, that “ignorance is the mother of devotion.” This has been said by Deistical philosophers — this you have now frankly acknowledged to be true in regard to Deists. In the case you have supposed, had you never heard of God as the Creator of nature, which is derived from revelation, when you discovered the phenomenon of which you were ignorant, you would have regarded it, as you are obliged to do many others, as the effect of a law of nature, which you had not investigated, and your fancy could never have taken its flight, and by no possibility could you have transcended the bourne of nature, or have created any thing without the materials which nature furnished, as Hume has well observed. After fabricating your God by fancy, which you did in consequence of your ignorance of a phenomenon of nature, should that phenomenon be afterwards understood by you by a more perfect knowledge of nature’s laws, your God would become extinct; — yes, *your God* which is a *fiction of fancy*, and which you denominate, because you *borrowed* the name from the scriptures, “the one Supreme, and all wise, the God at once of the Philosopher and the Christian,” would be *annihilated* by that discovery, and you would sink down into Atheism. But Atheism cannot be true, or be for one moment sustained by reason, because the knowledge of God in the world cannot be explained or accounted for, but by the *fact* of his existence, and of his having *revealed himself* — God the Word, in his mediatorial character, has been the speaker and teacher to man since he fell, as he has been the revealer and source of language on spiritual subjects, and the source of spiritual knowledge.

CALVINIST. — I have attended carefully to all that you have said, and have examined the two Essays, Christian, and confess, that I am at a loss how to defend Calvin’s

views of natural religion. The suggestions you have made in relation to the origin of language in religion, which you assert originated in the Logos, or *Word*, and is the means of spiritual ideas and knowledge, are in direct opposition to all the systems and opinions of this age. All believe that God when he speaks to men, uses the words of men, invented by themselves, to make known the things of God, which if true, men must have known the things of God without any revelation, and must have discovered them before they invented the words which express them. Can this be true?

DEIST. — Yes, it is true, if natural religion be true, and proves that there is indeed no revealed religion at all — it proves, that all that your Bible says, were the original inventions of men, both in regard to *things* and *language*, and that instead of men being dependent upon God for what is made known in the scriptures, God, if he has said any thing, was dependent upon men for what he said. The Bible, agreeably to this view of the subject, may do very well for the unlearned and ignorant portions of society, but the Philosopher and man of science, go to the source; they “rise through nature up to nature’s God” without revealed words and sentences. I confess that Christian’s views of the origin of language on divine and spiritual subjects, have something in them which embarrasses me. I have ever considered language to be the expression of the various states of the mind, which are produced by its sensible connection with the external world, and by its own internal action; or in other words, that language is the manifestation, by sounds, and actions, and written signs, of the ideas and feelings, sentiments and reflections of the mind, and which must have of course originated in, or been invented by man — *scientific, natural* man.

But agreeably to Christian's view of language in its origin and use in religion, and on spiritual subjects, it was revealed and stipulated by God himself, and is by his appointment the means of spiritual objective ideas, and of thought and feeling, as it is the instrument of expressing them. If this be true, language in religion in its original ideas is perfect, and is capable of no improvement, except by new revelations; and all that we have to do, or can do in religious improvement, is to learn the meaning and sense of the nouns and verbs, and adjectives, and other parts of speech, which compose what is called the word of God, and to improve the faith, and hope, and love which it produces, by cherishing its sense and spirit, and by practising the duties which it requires. But the truth of all this, is contradicted by the consent and conduct of every christian sect.

They have almost all of them made their own creeds and confessions of faith, which must have been formed to remedy the perceived defects and imperfections of the scriptures, and to improve the word of God. They have by these means made different denominations, and different sorts of christians, which are known by different names, forms of worship and language; their views of God are different, and their affections and conduct towards each other are different from what they are towards their own parties. There are some, to be sure, who *profess* to renounce and disown all human creeds and confessions, and to take the naked book and word of God to be their religion, but there is as great a diversity and contrariety among them, as there is among the creed-makers. Among them I find Arians and Socinians, Unitarians and Trinitarians. There are some among them, who deny the atonement of Jesus Christ and his proper divinity, and who assert, that sinners are saved by the grace of God with-

out an atonement, and there are others who affirm these things. Indeed some of them approach so near to Deism, that it seems to me that the scriptures are rather an incumbrance to their systems, than any real use to them, except in furnishing them with some colourable pretence of being christians, and of giving consequence and importance to a low, selfish, vain, party spirit.

Now, I ask, how can all this diversity and contrariety exist, if the scriptures be true, and are the only means of divine and spiritual knowledge, and of religious union, peace and love?

CHRISTIAN.—The word of God is *perfect*, and means the same things now, that it did when it was first revealed, and is intended for the same purposes now that it was then. What is true now was true then, and ever will be; and of course admits of no changes. It speaks the same things to all men, under similar circumstances; and when truly apprehended, understood, believed and practised, it makes all alike, in faith, hope and love. It leaves no room or occasion for new or original discoveries in religion. The right interpretation of the scriptures is that which deduces from them the very sense which the Holy Spirit, by the writers of them intended to convey. To understand the writings of the Holy Spirit, is to connect with his words the objects and the thoughts which he designed to designate and express by them.

The creeds, sects and systems, which you have mentioned, and which you think originated from the imperfection and defects of the word of God among professed christians, had their origin in the false opinion which you and Calvinist entertain of revelation, and in the corruption of it. They originated in a total misapprehension of the necessity, nature and use of the word of God. Those persons with whom they began, believed as both of you do,

that the language of the word of God was of human invention and stipulation, and of course that the things which it reveals were discovered by the natural operations and efforts of the human mind, before the language was invented. The false assumption of power that this opinion makes for the human mind, to invent and form religion, and to make religious creeds and systems without revelation, denies the Bible to be the word of God, and releases the mind altogether from its use and authority. And, admitting God to have spoken to us by it, it makes him dependent upon man for all that he has said. It puts man in the place of God, in the original discovery of it, and it puts God in the place of man, as dependent upon him for its use.

**CALVINIST.**—What you have both said, taken in connection with the depravity of man, shows the necessity of the operations of the Spirit distinct from, and independent of the word, to convert sinners, and to make them know and believe that the word of God is true, whether it was invented by men originally or not.

**CHRISTIAN.**—Agreeably to your views of the word, whatever may be said about the operations of the Spirit, in the conversion of sinners, it is self-evident that the Word has nothing to do with it. That word, and the things which it expresses, having been of human invention, agreeably to your view of it, it cannot by any divine influence, impart to the mind more than it possesses naturally! It can communicate no idea or information that is not natural to the human mind. Agreeably to this view, the objects of faith are all of human invention or discovery, as is the language which expresses them. This is the reason of the confusion and contradictions, and of the sects and parties that exist in religion. Every body is set to work to *make* religion for himself, and cuts and mangles

the precious word of God as if it was not a body of living truth. And faith, instead of its being the knowledge and belief of things not seen, and which are only known by the revelations of the word of God, is any thing that any person pleases to make it, except what God has described it to be. And all the speculations and controversies about the operations of the Spirit, are produced by unscriptural views of the subject, and essentially by wrong views of the word of God. Erroneous views of the operations of the Spirit, or rather unscriptural ones, are believed and maintained, to remedy the defects, or rather the flagrant errors of your views of the divine origin and use of the word of God in religion. After nullifying the word of God, by making it the word of man, your system requires the immediate physical agencies of the Spirit, to enable you and others to believe it to be the word of God; and this of course cannot be supposed to be done without the operation of new faculties and powers, which are superinduced by the Spirit upon the human mind and manifest themselves by imagination and passion.

The Spirit never can reveal any thing more by the word than is in it—than is in its sense and meaning, and which it had when it was first revealed and written, and will forever have. Agreeably to Paul's view of the subject, the word of God itself was revealed by the Spirit to the Apostles, which *they spoke to make known the things* of God, and faith produced by it consists in the belief of that word, by which the things of the Spirit are received, having been first discerned through the word. The natural or animal man—the man who sees, and judges every thing by sense, and *the light of nature* and *carnal reason*, as Deists and Natural-religionists discern them,—discerns not the things of the Spirit, because he rejects the word of God, *as the word of God*, by which they are

made known, and therefore he receives them not as they are revealed: Cor. ii, 11, 14; and this is the reason why natural men are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: Rom. viii, 7. Before they can be made subject to the law of God, and the righteousness of the law be fulfilled in them, by walking according to the spirit, they must be made free by the faith of the Gospel, which Paul calls the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus: Rom. viii, 2. I repeat, that there is no power given to man, or occasion left him for making any new or original discoveries or improvements in religion. What you have said, Deist, is true; all that we can do, is to learn the grammatical and historical sense and meaning of the word of God, in its own parts of speech, facts, statements and connections, and to believe it by its own testimony, as it is in truth and indeed the word of God; to submit implicitly to its authority; to cherish the spirit and temper which it inculcates, and to practice the duties it requires, regarding all the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel, as instrumental and subservient to the formation and improvement of the christian character, and to the individual and social usefulness and happiness of man, and the glory of God. This, if suitably regarded, would soon bring all christians to the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God. It is not realized sufficiently by christians, that the *existence* and operations of the spirit himself, are objects of faith, and are only known by revelation.

In the next Essay I will take up in form, the investigation of the origin and use of language in religion, and spiritual science.

## ESSAY III.

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### THE ORIGIN AND USE OF LANGUAGE IN RELIGION.

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Without revealed language, revealed and stipulated by God himself, I maintain, that in the fallen state of man, he would be destitute of the knowledge of God, and of spiritual things.

I grant that the knowledge of God, and the use of language have existed in the world since it was made. The Bible takes these things for granted, but it in no instance or degree asserts, or implies, that since the fall of man, they have existed independent of supernatural revelation in words and sentences, or that they have existed as a natural endowment, but uniformly the contrary.

It is true that language is the expression of the various ideas and states of mind, which are produced by its sensible connection with the external world, and by its own internal operations. In other words, language is the manifestation, by sounds and actions, and written signs, of ideas and feelings, sentiments and reflections. Language bears a necessary and specific relation to the intellect in all its varying states and conditions, as produced by external objects, and its own perceptions and operations. But language cannot be employed to express or represent a state that does not exist. The mind sustains no *naturally perceived sensible* connection with spiritual things, and consequently, no ideas, thoughts or feelings, are produced by such a connection. Language in this case cannot be



invented by man, because of the want of the ideas and knowledge of the spiritual things of which language is the sign, and representation. Ideas and feelings must exist before language can be formed or used to express them. But original ideas and feelings, in relation to God and spiritual things, are not produced by any connection that the mind bears to natural and sensible objects, and of course language to express them could not be formed by any operation of the mind upon them, or by any sensible connection they sustain to it. On divine and spiritual subjects, the Logos or Word is the author of language, as he is the Light of the world. Language in this case, is the *means* by which spiritual ideas, knowledge, faith and feeling are *produced* in the human mind, as it is the *instrument* by which they are *expressed*. The *objects* which produce the various ideas and states of mind *in religion*, are objects of *faith*, and not of *sense*, and bear no naturally perceived sensible connection with the mind. Revelation makes them known to the mind, as it is the *evidence of things not seen*. This *recorded* revelation consists in nouns and verbs, and adjectives, which are all supernatural, miraculous and divine in their origin, as they are in the record and in the heart that believes them. These are the sounds, and actions, and written signs, by which God communicates or produces ideas, knowledge, faith and feelings, of and concerning himself, and other spiritual things, in the human mind, and by which they are expressed and manifested.

In this case the mind is the recipient of spiritual intelligence, and language is the instrument by which it is conveyed to it, and is afterwards the means of expressing it and its effects upon the mind and states which it produces.

After the mind is instructed by revelation in the exis-

tence of God, and the fact that he created the world and sustains it, it cannot embrace either his form or essence, or mode of operation, because we see him only through the revelation which is the evidence of things not seen. That revelation associates God with the things seen as their Creator.

Nature is necessary for acquiring spiritual ideas, since the *immediate*, supernatural, and miraculous revelations and inspirations ceased, although it does not teach them, as light is necessary to enable us to read, although it neither supplies us with the book, nor teaches us to read. We must understand in some degree what is natural to man, in order that we may know what is supernatural.

The ideas, knowledge, faith and feelings, produced in the mind by religious objects, partake of the nature and qualities of the objects which excite them. They operate upon the mind as the mind *perceives them*, and not as they are in themselves. Hence the importance and the necessity of seeing things in their own proper nature, sense and character, that they may produce their proper effects. We must apprehend the word of God, as it is in truth and indeed, the Word of God, and not the word of man, that it may work effectually. The ideas and views, the faith, the hope and the love produced *by the word of God in its own proper sense and meaning, are as really spiritual and divine as they would be, were they produced by the immediate inspirations and revelations of the Spirit.*

For a further illustration and proof of the divine origin, and the necessity and use of language in religion, I observe, that every nation has words peculiar to itself, just so far as it has *objects* and *things* peculiar to itself. Nations, among whom particular objects are wanting, cannot invent words to express them, nor can there be a *translation* of the words borrowed from other nations, expressive

of unknown objects into their own language. All that can be done, is to *transfer* the words themselves into their language, and leave them to be explained in the Lexicons by much periphrasis or historical description, to be made by those who know the objects.

The inhabitants of the tropics, for example, have no ice or snow, and therefore, words which are the signs of these things in our country, and latitude, could not have been invented by tropical inhabitants, who had never seen or known them; and if ever incorporated into their language, must be transferred without a translation. The Greeks and Romans had no cannon, or mariners' compass, electricity, or man of war; and therefore words which are signs of these things, in our age, could not have been invented by them; and if now incorporated into their language, they must be transferred without a translation. All these things were discovered or known before names were given to them, in the ages and countries in which they were named. The phenomena of nature, and the inventions and arts of men, brought forth these things into sensible manifestation, and they exhibit nothing but natural existences, consisting of natural substances and powers, and natural inventions. But this is not the case with respect to God or spiritual existences. The original ideas of these were not obtained from natural appearances, nor were the words which are expressive of them suggested by them. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath *declared* him.

The appearances and operations of nature are as well understood now as they were in the thousands of years that are passed. Now they exhibit nothing but natural existence. They indicate the original creation or beginning of nothing, nor do they suggest the existence or open-

ration of any thing or being that exists distinct from and independent of nature and its powers. Had the present state of things always existed, without *immediate miraculous operations and supernatural revelations*, as is the case now, there could have been no idea or knowledge of God or of spiritual things, or words to express them. There could have been no Bible — no vocabulary of spiritual things, or ideas, thoughts or feelings concerning them, such as we now have. There were then periods when the present state of things did not exist. When supernatural and miraculous revelations in words and works *originated and were made*, by which the knowledge of spiritual things was communicated and confirmed. These were made by God himself. In these originated our Bible, which is the divinely created and established source and means of all true religious and spiritual perception and knowledge.

It is roundly asserted by some deistical philosophers, and Natural Religionist Christians, that *language* cannot impart the idea or knowledge of any thing to the mind, which it had not before obtained or learnt from nature; and that it cannot be the instrument of communicating from one mind to another information, thoughts and feelings on objects and subjects, which were not previously known to the mind receiving the communication. This was Locke's opinion. If this be true, I confess that revelation, in words and sentences, and miraculous works, can teach us nothing — can make known nothing that was not obtained from nature. The following case proves the error of all this, and illustrates the supernatural origin and present use of the word of God in our spiritual knowledge and religious improvement, exercises and enjoyments.

Here is blind Bartimeus, who has never *seen* one visible object, nor has one ray of light ever entered his eye or been *heard* of by him. He is totally destitute of all

thought and feeling upon the subject of the existence of light and vision. He has no word or sign to express either. Examine him carefully and you will find this to be the case. The reason of it is that he was born with a cataract which rendered him totally blind, and he was raised among a people who never used any word or expression which indicated the existence of light or vision.

I am now about to teach him by *words and actions*, the existence of *light* and of *visible objects* which he could never *naturally* know, as they are to his situation *supernatural*. He is well acquainted with the objects, that impress his senses of *touch*, of *smell* and of *taste*, and the sensations produced by them, and the language which he has been taught, and the words and sentences, which he has used in conversing with others, have been strictly formed and limited by them. These form the bounding circle within which his perception, memory, imagination and judgment operate, including the various states of mind, which its own action upon these objects and their operations upon it produce.

I take him by the hand and say to him, Bartimeus, I am about to teach you something that you never knew or thought of before. I tell him that there are such things as *light* and *vision*. These words upon his first hearing them produce no definite idea, because they have no distinction in the sound. My design is to communicate to him as far as possible the *sense* and *meaning* which these words have in my own mind. This I can do only by *words* and *actions*, which can in neither case be addressed to his eyes, because they are blind. Light and vision to his natural state are *objects of faith*, and can only be made known to him by revelation. I describe *light* and *vision* to him, and associate them with and illustrate them by *words* and *actions*, all of which are supernatural to his situation.

I say to him, Bartimeus, we are now standing in the light, and it is all over and around us. By its influence upon my eyes, I see and can lead you in perfect safety along the most difficult, intricate, and dangerous ways. Light enables me to see at a distance, all the objects that lie in our way, and to avoid them. I lead him on with rapid steps, and inform him of all the things we pass before we arrive at them, and describe their nature and qualities; the truth of which he tests by his senses of touch, of taste, of smell, and of hearing, as we pass them. In this process every word and action in his mind is associated with the *word light*, and clothes it with the appropriate qualifications which make it the stipulated *sign* of the *thing* which I call light. I inform him that light makes fruits and vegetables grow, which supply him every day and hour with food, as they do many other animals. He feels and tastes the fruits and vegetables. I describe to him the power of light in enabling me to read books, which were written by its influence, and which treat of periods, events and things at a great distance off in time and place. The truth of these things I illustrate and confirm in various ways. I inform him that all mankind are enabled to pursue their necessary and daily business by the influence of light. Of this he is also assured by his neighbours with whom he holds intercourse. By these means the word light, which has now so often sounded in his ears, and been associated with actions and things, which could not have been performed or have been known without it, becomes fixed in his mind as the sign of the thing or substance which it stands for.

Bartimeus cherishes the remembrance of the word light, with all its qualities which have been associated with it by verbal descriptions, actions and feelings. He talks about them as I talked to him, and he thinks and feels about

them. He *believes* in the existence of light though he has never seen it. He believes by revelation and testimony which to his state are altogether supernatural. They are however, not more supernatural, nor as much so as the means are supernatural to our state, by which we know and believe in God, and in the fact of creation.

In addition to what I have already taught Bartimeus, by which I have produced faith in him, which "is the evidence or demonstration of things that he has not seen," I inform him that I can perform an operation upon his eyes by couching them, by which I will enable him to *see* and *walk*, and *feel*, and *read*, and *enjoy light* and *vision* as I do. This excites in him *new ideas and feelings*, and by *believing it*, he has *hope*. His "faith is (*now*) the substance of things hoped for" and also "the evidence of things not seen." In order that I may operate successfully, I tell him that he must submit to some privations and pains—that he must take medicine, and be bled, and perhaps blistered, and live abstemiously. His *faith* and *hope* enable him to overcome every natural indisposition to follow my directions, and to submit implicitly to them, which he could not possibly have done, without the information and motives which I have furnished him with. By faith he has obtained *power* to do these things.

Now examine Bartimeus, and say whether or not he has received any information, or any ideas, perceptions, views or feelings, from my instructions that he had not before? He will tell you he has. He *manifests* actual states of mind in words and actions, of which he is conscious, which he knew nothing of previously. He has a new vocabulary, as he has a new class of objects and feelings. His vocabulary includes nouns, and verbs, and adjectives, which he never thought of, knew, or felt, or used before. The new views, information, faith, hope, affection, and

conduct which he now possesses, were produced by words and sentences, and works, which I employed to instruct him.

To have proposed to Bartimeus to deny himself various articles of food that he loved, and to submit to take medicine, to be bled and blistered, and to have his eyes pierced with a sharp instrument in couching them, without the information that I imparted to him, would have excited his most decided opposition, hostility and rage.

Suppose Bartimeus, before being couched, should desire to teach other blind men what he has learnt and now knows, and to impart to them the same views and feelings that he has, and to induce them to prepare for the operation of couching that they also may see, what must he, or what can he do? He must speak to them as I spoke to him; he must use the word light as I used it, and describe it as I described it. He must represent its operations upon *me* in enabling me to see, and *through me upon himself*, as I manifested them to him, and as its influences were excited upon him. He must tell of my leading him about by its influences, and of my seeing objects at a distance, and the proof that I gave him of it by telling him of it, and of my leading him to them, and of his touching them. He must impress by *verbal description and action* the word light upon their minds, and *tie* to it, or associate with it, all the properties of light that he has learnt, and thereby fix that word in their minds as the sign of the *thing* called light. And thus by the nouns, and verbs, and adjectives, answering to the *objects* or *things*, *actions* and *qualities* which I used and manifested to him, he will transfer to or excite in other blind men's minds the same ideas and views, desires, and states of mind, which he derived from me. And by the faith and hope which Bartimeus has thus produced, and the desires he has excited in their minds,



which are analogous to his own, they will pursue the same course of conduct in preparing themselves to be successfully couched, that they may see. They possess the same views and feelings, and are influenced by the same motives that he is, because they are produced by the same means, which operate upon minds possessing the same faculties and susceptibilities with his own.

Should these blind men desire to instruct other blind men as they have been instructed, and with the same objects in view, they must use the same words and actions that Bartimeus used with them, and which I used with him. The same means of instruction would, if used in the same way, produce the same effects through a thousand generations. But a change of words and sentences, and of actions, would produce correspondent different effects, and prevent or but partially produce the states of mind designed.

These supposed cases illustrate my view of the supernatural origin of language, and of its use in religion to the fallen state of man, in transmitting from mind to mind and from age to age spiritual knowledge. The mind of man is *naturally* as destitute of the knowledge of God and of spiritual things without revelation, as the mind of Bartimeus was of the existence of light and of visible objects without instruction. The word of God and the miraculous works which were associated with it when it was first revealed, and which are recorded, are as necessary now to produce religious or spiritual ideas, faith, hope and feeling, and religious conduct, as words and actions are to impart to men's minds who were born blind, the knowledge of the existence of light, and the other effects which I have described.

What I have said indicates the necessity of preserving the word of God pure as the author gave it, and of its be-

ing taught and learnt, and used in its own nouns, verbs, and adjectives, and other parts of speech, that the same ideas and perceptions, the same sentiments and feelings, the same faith, hope and conduct may be produced in all, which God designed should be.

For a further illustration of my views of the origin and use of language in religion, I might refer to the case of persons who were born deaf and dumb, and who in the asylums have been taught to read and understand the Scriptures. In every case, these unfortunate mutes had no idea or knowledge of God or of spiritual beings as existing distinct from and independent of natural ones, or of the *creation* of any thing from nothing, until they were taught them by words and actions; none had any idea of God until it was communicated by instruction. The case published in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences at Paris*, of a tradesman in Chartres, whose son was born deaf, and when he was twenty-three years old obtained his hearing, is full of conclusive information and evidence upon this subject. That case was published in "the Philosophy of the human mind in respect to religion," in 1813, p. 56-7. After the young man obtained his hearing, which was done without his knowing how, by a change taking place in his ears; and after learning to speak, he said, upon his being interrogated by several Catholic Priests, that concerning God, and the soul, moral good and evil, although he had been raised by religious parents, and had been used to go to mass, and had been instructed in all the externals of devotion, he knew nothing and had thought nothing. So true is it, that words are the instruments of our thoughts in spiritual and divine things, as they are the means of our ideas and knowledge.

The difference between the state of blind Bartimeus in regard to light and vision, and the state of mankind in re-

gard to spiritual and divine things, is in some respects very great, but in others very small. Although it be true, that God *is*, and that it is in him we live, move and have our being yet without revelation we are as ignorant of these things, as was Bartimeus of the existence and operations of light before he was instructed. God created us and preserves us, and is a living, intelligent, holy, righteous, merciful, and perfect being, without whose presence and power we cannot live for one moment. All these things are objects and matters of *faith*, and are manifested to us through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ by revelation; without which, we should not know them, or have one thought or feeling concerning them.

The use of God's word, and of the ordinances of the Gospel in religious instruction and worship, and devotional exercises, is to enlighten and imbue our minds more and more with the knowledge and sense of divine things, and to increase and strengthen our faith and hope, and love, and spiritual-mindedness. These are done by reading and understanding the word of God's grace, and by prayerful meditation, by singing God's praise, and by religious conversation and social worship, and by good works in deeds of Christian charity. In all this, Jesus Christ in his mediatorial character, who is Immanuel, God with us, and is our prophet, priest and king, is Alpha and Omega, our wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; without whom we can do nothing, either in the knowledge or the enjoyment of divine things, as he is the light of the world, the way, the truth and the life, the author and the finisher of our faith. Through his blood, by faith in his blood, God purifies our hearts or justifies us. Through faith in him the spirit operates upon the heart in sanctifying it. All the doctrines, ordinances and duties of the Gospel are designed for the same purpose, and when

truly believed, cherished and practised, produce and increase spiritual-mindedness. There are but few original spiritual ideas produced by revelation, perhaps not more than the following: the existence of Jehovah, in whom is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the existence of other spiritual beings; the creation of the world; the image of God in which man was made; his fall and redemption through the vicarious death and mediation of Jesus Christ; gratuitous justification; the separate existence of the soul at death from the body, the resurrection of the body and their re-union; a future judgment; the destruction of this world by fire; the existence of heaven and hell; the eternal happiness of the righteous, and everlasting punishment of the wicked.

I will in my next Essay give the views of a number of philologists of the divine origin of language, which strengthen the views which the previous investigations have established.

## ESSAY IV.

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### THE ORIGIN AND USE OF LANGUAGE.

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The origin and the use of language, agreeably to Parkhurst, Dr. Johnson, Dwight, Prof'r. Brown, and Dr. Webster — The traditionary means by which the knowledge of God and religion have been handed down from one generation to another — The chronological connection between Adam and Isaac.

Language was a co-eval endowment, bestowed upon our first parents by their munificent Creator the moment that gave them existence, as was the knowledge of spiritual and divine things, to the extent it was proper that they, as the moral subjects of God's government, should know them. On this subject, *Parkhurst*, the author of the Hebrew and Greek Lexicons, observes, "it is evident from the Mosaical account of the original formation of man, that language was the immediate gift of God to Adam, or that God himself, either taught our first parents to speak, or, which is the same thing, inspired them with language. It appears from Gen. ii, 19, 20, to be evident that Adam must in general have had ideas of actions and words suited to express those ideas, which words were no doubt taught him immediately by God; or in short that he must have language before he could give the animals proper and descriptive names. I cannot forbear adding on this occasion, that whatever fantastical notions some men may advance concerning the origin of language, and the possibility of man's gradually inventing it by his own natural, unassisted

powers, yet in fact not a single instance can be produced since the creation of the world of any human creature ever using articulate sounds as the signs of ideas, or in other words, of his *speaking* or having language, unless he was first taught it either immediately, and at once by God, as Adam was at his first formation, and the Apostles on the day of Pentecost were, or gradually by parents and nurses."

The endowments of Adam were a part of the first or old creation, and constituted in part the image and likeness of God in which he was made; and those of the Apostles were a part of the new creation. Both were bestowed by God, the Logos or Word; the former in his original, the latter in his mediatorial character.

Dr. T. Dwight says, that "God endowed man immediately with the power of speech and the knowledge of language to an extensive degree. It is proved among other things by the fact that our first parents were made *social beings*, and were made *helps meet* for each other. Without speech we cannot conceive a social state to exist, nor imagine the mutual assistance aimed at in the creation of the first pair to be in any possible manner accomplished. Without speech, millions crowded together would, for this very reason, find themselves in a more perfect solitude. Without speech mutually understood, mankind even now are strangers and aliens to each other; and are not only unable to render to each other any mutual assistance, but are ever ready mutually to suspect, hate, and separate. Confidence is never reposed, friendship never springs up where language is not understood, and where communications are not intelligibly and definitely made.

"That language was revealed, is a fact that cannot have been otherwise. Without language, society could not have been formed. God also revealed to man, in di-

rect and definite terms his whole duty, and disclosed to him the law by which his life was to be governed."

Dr. Johnson says, "Language must have been by *inspiration*. Inspiration was necessary to give man the knowledge of the faculty of speech, to inform him that he may speak, which I think he could no more find out without inspiration, than cows or hogs would think of such a faculty."

Brown, in his *Lectures on Mental Philosophy*, says, "to be without language written or spoken, is almost to be without thought.

"The noblest of all the benefits which language confers, is that permanent transmission of thought, which gives to each individual, the power and wisdom of his species;—by it the boundaries of time seem to be at once removed. Nothing is past, for every thing seems to live before us. The thoughts of beings who have trod the most distant soil, and the most distant periods, arise again in our mind with the same warmth and freshness, as when they first awoke in the bosom of their author. That system of perpetual transmigration, which was but a fable as believed by Pythagoras, becomes reality when it is applied not to the soul itself, but to its ideas, thoughts and feelings, through the intervention and instrumentality of language.

"There is beyond all doubt, a chain of thoughts of human kind, from the origin of the world down to the moment in which we exist—a chain not less universal than that of the generation of every thing that lives. We are in possession of opinions, which perhaps regulate our life in its most important concerns, with respect to which, we are as ignorant of the original author, by whom they have been literally and imperceptibly transmitted to us from mind to mind, as we are ignorant of those ancestors on

whose existence, in the thousands of years which preceded our entrance into the world, our life itself had depended, and without whom, therefore, we should not have been.

“Such are the benefits which result from language, the happiest of all inventions — *if indeed it be an invention of man, and not rather as many have thought, a co-eval power bestowed on him by his provident Creator, at the moment that gave him life.*”

Dr. Webster says that “Adam was not only endowed with intellect for understanding his Maker, or the signification of words, but was furnished both with the faculty of speech, and with speech itself; or the knowledge and use of words as signs of ideas; and this before the formation of the woman. Hence we may infer that language was bestowed on Adam, in the same manner as all his other faculties and knowledge, by supernatural power; or in other words was of supernatural origin.”

The observations of these distinguished men, apply with peculiar force to the origin and use of language, in regard to spiritual and divine subjects. In the first creation of man, the knowledge and use of language, on natural and divine subjects, and the knowledge of natural and divine things, were co-eval. After the fall of man these co-eval endowments ceased, and the communications of God were made to him by external revelation, in words and sentences, suited to his fallen, guilty condition, and in reference to his redemption by Christ Jesus. They were enlarged at different periods by new revelations, under the Patriarchal and Mosaical dispensations, and were perfected by Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, in the Gospel. That external revelation by language, after the fall repeatedly made, has been the means of spiritual knowledge, and the instrument by which the knowledge of God and spiritual things has been transmitted from mind to mind,



and from age to age, and from nation to nation, and is now the instrument, is evident from the fact that no period has existed since the fall of man, at which this chain of spiritual and divine knowledge being broken, and the intelligence communicated by it being forgotten or lost, and new revelation withheld or denied, that the human mind could, by any effort employed upon nature or itself alone, supply its use, or receive the ideas or information which it conveys, or could "rise through nature up to nature's God."

The language of God in his Word, is now as well the instrument of thought and feeling upon spiritual and divine subjects, as it is of speech. It is the only means which enables the mind to transcend the boundaries of time and sense, in thought and feeling, by carrying it backwards and forwards into eternity. By it we are made spectators of the birth of the Universe, and live through every age of time, and witness its close in the funeral of nature. The word of God's grace brings into the present states of mind, through faith in Jesus Christ, a sense of pardoned sin and of divine favor, and enables us to hold fellowship with God, and to enjoy eternal things.

We are informed by the scriptures, that religion, or the knowledge of God, and the knowledge and use of language in our world began with Adam in paradise, and that they were co-eval endowments. After he fell, and by the fall he lost these co-eval endowments, which of course did not descend to his posterity. In his fallen state he begat children after his own likeness. These by wisdom did not know God. The change which sin produced in the state of man, and in the relation he sustained to God, changed the order and system of religion which existed before. And the spiritual knowledge and feeling which were co-eval and *natural* to man's primitive state of purity

and innocence, became *supernatural* to his *fallen state*. In that state, religion has ever since been imparted to him by grace, through external revelation, and has always had reference to the atonement or expiatory death of Jesus Christ.

God spoke often, in various ways, to sundry persons, which began immediately after the fall, partly for their own instruction and guidance in the knowledge of himself and will, and partly for others. So he spoke to Adam immediately after the fall, and to Abel, who by faith, that is, by obedience to the revealed will and command of God, offered an acceptable sacrifice, and by which, he being dead, yet speaketh. He spoke also unto Enoch, who was enabled thereby to walk with God, and to prophecy, and to warn and instruct others. God spoke also to Noah, who was faithful to what he was taught, and was constituted the heir of the righteousness which is by faith, and was made a preacher of righteousness. He being warned of God, by revelation, of a flood and other *things not seen as yet*, which existed in the divine mind and purpose, and which were altogether supernatural, moved with fear prepared the ark. God also spoke to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Every age and season had, by divine revelation, light enough to guide them in the whole obedience required of them, had they been faithful to what was given to them. The ante-diluvians did not perish for the want of sufficient revelation, but, as Faber, in his work on the three dispensations has proven, because they *rejected altogether the doctrine of Redemption*. And no other nation has died since the flood, for the want of sufficient revelation, but because of the *corruption* of the doctrine of redemption, for the rejection of which the ante-diluvians perished.

It is true, that when we consider, in the light that we have, those divine instructions which are upon record,

which God granted to those who lived at early periods of the world, we are scarcely able to discern how they could sufficiently know all that was necessary for them to believe and do. They were to them "as a light shining in a dark place." Set up a candle in a dark room, and it will sufficiently enlighten it for men to attend to their business in it. But when the sun rises and shines in at the windows, the light of the candle grows so dim and useless that it seems strange that it could have been of any use. The Sun of righteousness is now risen upon us, and the light of the candle has disappeared. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shines upon us through the Gospel, in the face of Jesus Christ, and the way into the holiest of all is made manifest.

If we look on the revelations granted to those who lived before the Gospel times, we see there was light in them, which, however, yields us as little as a candle does, set in the sun-shine. But to them who lived before Christ came, they were a sufficient guide to all the duties of faith and conduct required of them.

There was, during this season, a sufficient ministry for the declaration of the revelations which God made of himself and will. There was the natural ministry of parents, who were obliged to instruct their children and families in the knowledge and practice of the truth they had received. This began with Adam, who first received the promise of Messiah, the seed of the woman. He instructed his sons and daughters. They learnt from him the state in which he was made and from which he fell, and what he lost by the fall. He taught them the divine institution of worship, which was suited to his fallen sinful state; and of sacrifice, which pointed to the atonement of Jesus Christ — *the bruising of the seed of the woman*. He continued to instruct them nine hundred and thirty

years, during which time he doubtless received many new revelations. The knowledge of these things could not be lost without the wilful neglect of parents in teaching their children and families, or in their neglect in learning them. There was also the Sabbath, which was a memorial of the Creation of all things, and was made a sign between God and man, by God's own appointment, to preserve the world from idolatry and from Atheism. They had, moreover, the ministry of such persons as God intrusted, from time to time, with new revelations, for the confirmation and enlargement of those before given, who were all of them preachers of righteousness unto the rest of mankind.

From the giving of the first promise, when external divine revelation began to be the means of spiritual instruction, or the means of faith and the directory of life, to the writing of the law of Moses, which was about twenty-four hundred and sixty years, there were always alive, one and another, who, receiving divine revelations immediately from God, were a kind of infallible guides to all others. If it was otherwise at any time, it was after the death of the patriarchs, and before the call of Moses, during which time all things went into darkness and confusion. The righteousness of God, suited to their state, had been revealed to them by inspired men, but they held the truth in unrighteousness. Paul says, "that which might be known of God from the creation of the world, he showed unto them, but they glorified him not as God when they knew him, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise without the revelations of God, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping

things. And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate or undiscerning mind." Such seems to have been the origin of idolatry in the patriarchal state, as it was afterwards among the Jewish nation.

Oral tradition alone could not preserve the truth of revelation pure, especially when men's lives were so much shortened as they were after the flood.

To alter or corrupt the *language* in which religion was revealed, would be to corrupt the people. Hence, when God formed the *Old Covenant*, and organized the Jewish nation upon it into a church or congregation, under a Theocracy, or a government which God himself administered, he wrote that Covenant upon two tables of stone, which was perhaps, the first written document that man ever saw; and hence it is called the Covenant of the letter, by Paul. 2 Cor. iii, 6, in allusion to Exodus xxxiv, 28.

The following chronological statement indicates the connection and the order of communication that existed from Adam to Isaac, and plainly shows how easily religious knowledge, by tradition, might be communicated from one to another, and how the *nations* of the earth obtained their religious information.

Adam was co-temporary with Lamech 56 years, with Methuselah 243 years, and with Jared 470 years. Noah was co-temporary with Lamech 595 years, with Methuselah 600 years, and with Jared 336 years. These lived before the flood. And Shem, Ham and Japheth, the three sons of Noah, were one hundred years old when the flood came. They were co-temporaries with Lamech 95 years, and with Methuselah 98 years, before the flood, and lived with their father Noah before the flood 100 years. And Shem lived with him after the flood 350 years. He lived also with Abraham 150 years, and with Isaac 50 years.

The first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, shows how idolatry was introduced into the world among the Gentiles, and from which I have made quotations. Moses guards the Jewish nation against the same tendency, arising from the same causes, in Deut. iv., and which several times led them into idolatry. These historical facts show the tendency of the human mind to corrupt the knowledge of God, after it has been communicated or made known by revelation, which all history corroborates. But there is no instance in the world of any nation or individual arriving at the knowledge of divine truth by its own discoveries, or of regaining it after it was lost, but by a new revelation. In accordance with the truth of this statement, the nearer we approach to Noah, the nearer we universally come to the true and perfect character and unperplexed worship of Jehovah; and the farther we recede from this patriarch, the deeper we find ourselves sinking into the abyss of idolatry. Whereas, were the knowledge of God and religion inferable from nature, this process would of course be inverted. For as man became more enlightened by science, the world would know God better. The fact however, has been uniformly contrary to this. As tradition has declined, the knowledge of God has declined with it; as tradition has been corrupted, the knowledge of God has been corrupted; when it has been lost, the knowledge of God has been lost. The same is true in respect to the written word of God under the old and new dispensations. As the word has been corrupted or neglected, so has religion been. When Christ came into the world, the Jewish nation had made the word of God of none effect by their traditions and commandments, and the Gentiles were wholly given to idolatry and to Atheism. And no nation or individual has ever been extricated from idolatry or Atheism, since

Christ came into the world, but by the Gospel; or been civilized, but by the same means. This is the perfect law of liberty, whose light and moral influence alone can qualify a nation for a free government.

## ESSAY V.

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### THE NEW COVENANT.

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The New Covenant, or Gospel constitution of religion, signifies that divine settlement or establishment of things, wherein God, by means of the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, and the word of the gospel, communicates his grace, mercy and truth to mankind; gives to them remission of sins and repentance through faith, reconciles them, and takes them into a friendly relation to himself, and puts his laws into their minds and writes them on their hearts; stipulates blessings and privileges to them, and gives them his laws and ordinances as the rules of their obedience and correspondence with Him, and of their union and fellowship with each other in Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant, or Gospel dispensation, is that, according to the rich provisions of which, the heathen is given to Jesus Christ for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. Under it, the light of God's glory shines in the face of Jesus Christ, and is intended to enlighten the world. He achieved the authority and power of universal king by virtue of his death. Every ray of light that emanates from him is of a gospel character, and shines through his cross. Every word that is uttered by his ambassadors and is derived from his gospel, proclaims good news to sinners—redemption through his blood, and the forgiveness of sin, to every humble, sincere believer. Through his sufferings



and death, he obtained the power and office of Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sin; and there is no true repentance that is not given by him through the gospel.

The New Covenant was described by, and was comprehended in the promise that God made by Jeremiah and repeated by Paul, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my Covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord; but this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." Jer. xxxi, 31-34; Heb. 8.

This Covenant is called a New Covenant, in comparison to the Covenant God made with the Jewish nation at Horeb, which is called the Old Covenant, and upon which he organized them as his church or congregation, and which, with its priesthood, was only typical and temporary, and was abolished by the death of Christ and by the establishment of the Gospel Covenant. Heb. viii, 6, 13; x, 5, 18.

The New Covenant has laws as the Old one had. Moses wrote the laws of the Old Covenant; and the laws of the New one are to be found in the book of the New Covenant, which was written by the Evangelists and the Apostles

The laws of the Old one, though written twice by the finger of God, were engraven only on tables of stone, (Exod. xxxi, 18; xxxiv, 1;) and not on the hearts of the people; and therefore, when the Jewish people promised to obey them, the Lord, who knew their hearts better than they did themselves, said, "O that there were such a heart in them that they would fear me, and keep my commandments always." Deut. v, 27-29. But in the New Covenant he promised to supply what was wanting in the first, and to give his laws in a more effectual manner, so as to secure the obedience of his people under it. They were to be "written, not with ink," as in the book of the law, "but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." 2 Cor. iii, 3. This was done by faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, which secured the actual remission of sin to every true believer, and the *reception* of the Spirit of God.

The old Jewish or Horeb Covenant was temporary and typical, and its offerings were carnal. It made no provision for the actual remission of spiritual sins; "the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctified only to the purifying of the flesh; but the blood of the New Covenant, the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purifies the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." Heb. ix, 13, 14. Through it God purifies the heart by faith. Acts xv, 9.

The Old Covenant and offerings were only a shadow of good things to come, and never made the comers thereunto perfect. In its sacrifices there was a *remembrance* again made of sins every year, and not the *remission* of them. Wherefore, when the New Covenant was about to be established, and Christ's blood was to be shed *for the remission of sin, or in order to it*, he said, "Lo, I come to

do thy will, O God, in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins thou hast no pleasure." Jesus Christ did the will of God by offering his body, which God had ordained and prepared for him, once for all, by which he perfected forever them that are sanctified. By faith in him, the sins and iniquities of all true believers are remembered no more. They are justified freely, by grace, through the redemption there is in Christ Jesus: they have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. And where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

The New Covenant is called by Paul *the Covenant of the Spirit*, in comparison with the Old Covenant, which is termed the Covenant of the letter: 2 Cor. iii, 6, in allusion to Exod. xxxiv, 28, where the ten commandments written with *letters* on two tables of stone are called, "the words of the covenant."

The New Covenant on which the Gospel Church is built, and which secures the remission of sin, by the blood of Christ, to all true believers, who are the only proper members of that church, and of which the Apostles were able ministers, is called the Covenant of the Spirit, in allusion to Jer. xxxi, 33; and because it secures the remission of spiritual sins—bestows spiritual influences, and gives the qualifications for spiritual worship, and secures spiritual enjoyment. It is also called the Covenant of the Spirit, because it was ushered in, agreeably to ancient prophecy, by the outpouring of the Spirit at its commencement on the day of Pentecost and afterwards, and was the foundation of a spiritual church, and of the spiritual kingdom of God; and because it was published to the world, after Christ made the one offering of his own body in Heaven, and was glorified as High Priest forever, by the inspirations of the Spirit, and was confirmed and

sealed by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, bestowed upon the early believers. Paul said, "God hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive;" the Covenant of the letter killeth every sinner by its curse, but the Covenant of the Spirit maketh alive every believer by its promises: 2 Cor. iii, 6. It is called the Covenant of the Spirit also, because it secures the resurrection of our corrupt natural bodies, incorruptible and spiritual bodies: 1 Cor. xv, 44.

Paul terms the Covenant of the letter, *Moses*, because he was the minister of that Covenant, and he calls the Covenant of the Spirit *the Lord*, because the Lord Jesus Christ is the author and mediatorial administrator of it: 2 Cor. iii, 17. In the last verse, he says, "the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Macknight explains it thus, "The Lord signifies the Covenant of the Spirit, of which the Apostles were ministers, and where the Spirit, the inspiration of the Lord is, there is freedom of speaking." In Paul's Epistles, *Christ*, and *Christ Jesus*, are often put for the Gospel or the Covenant of the Spirit.

The establishment of the New Covenant, by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, abrogated the Old Covenant and Jewish state. This left the Jews in a state of widowhood, in respect to that Covenant, and free to marry him who was risen from the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ: Rom. vii, 4. This they did, when they believed in him as Messiah and were baptized into his name.

The New Covenant knows nothing of any salvation but through faith. Infants dying in infancy are saved, as to the price of redemption, just as adults are. They are saved by the same atonement, but they are not saved as adults are, by the truth believed. That sacrifice, which

is the ground of the New Covenant, is the salvation of infants who die in infancy. But there is no part of the Word of God that intimates, that it is *through faith* in that sacrifice that they are saved. God, who purifies the hearts of adults through faith in that sacrifice, can apply it to dying infants without faith; for faith has no merit more than works. Infants have nothing to do with *a covenant* that requires faith for salvation. The atonement of Christ is not the New Covenant, though it is the foundation of it. Were it true that infants could not be saved but by this Covenant, none of them would be saved, because none of them can believe. This would denounce to condemnation, all who die before the belief of the Gospel. Infants who die are included in the Covenant of redemption, according to which Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. Though infants are not saved by faith, they can join in the song of the Lamb in Heaven—"Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

The subjects of the New Covenant *know* the Lord—all of them know him—even *the least of them*:—*they have the law of God put into their mind, and written on their heart*. This is done by faith in the Gospel. This surely cannot include infants, who know nothing. Is there not a necessity to teach children as soon as they are capable of instruction, to know the Lord? Are any children found, who need not this instruction? We have seen that Calvin's notion of instinctive or innate religion is not true. If not, there are no infants in this Covenant. I repeat, that the sacrifice of the Son of God was as necessary for infants as for adults. But had it pleased God, that all that shall be saved should die in infancy, there would have been no need of the New Covenant at all.

The gospel, then, would have never been preached; no person in his senses would preach to infants before they could know the meaning of words. The necessity of faith, and the necessity of atonement, are not of the same kind. Without the atonement, none can be saved. Adults are saved by faith in the atonement;—infants who die in infancy, are saved by the grace of God, through the atonement, without faith.

The infants of Abraham were not saved, when they died in infancy, by Abraham's Covenant. He was not the *spiritual* father of his own infant seed. He was not constituted the head of all the redeemed, but the head of *believers* only. By the Covenant made with him, he was constituted the father of all them that believe, out of every nation. To his own descendants he was "the spiritual father only of them who walk in the steps of that faith" which he had. He was justified by faith, and was made the father of all of them that believe: Rom. iv, 9—Gal. iii, 6, 7, 9. There was no spiritual connection between Abraham and his infant seed, by the Covenant that God made with him. His justification was not the pattern of theirs. He was justified by faith: his infants dying in infancy were not justified by faith. They were saved, as all infants were saved from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end of the world, through the *bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman*. The Covenant made with Abraham in Gen. xii, 1–3, is not made with all believers. Has God promised to every believer that he will make him a great nation as he did to Abraham? Or that he shall be as celebrated as Abraham? Or that Messiah shall descend from him? Or that in him all families of the earth shall be blessed? Every believer shall be blessed according to that Covenant, but it is by having his faith, like Abraham's, counted to him for righteousness.

not by being like Abraham, the father of any of the faithful.

The Covenant made with Abraham has a *letter* and a *spirit*. For the accomplishment of the grand promise, that all nations should be blessed in Abraham, several promises were given him. He was to have a numerous posterity, which was fulfilled in the letter, in the nation of Israel. It was fulfilled in the spirit, by the divine constitution that makes all believers the children of Abraham, under the Gospel. The nation of the Jews were Abraham's children, according to *the flesh*, yet there is a sense in which Jesus Christ denies that they were the children of Abraham: John viii, 39-44: Gal. iv—and in that sense they were the bond sons of Hagar. The christian Gentiles are not the children of Abraham according to the flesh, but they are his children according to the Spirit, by having Abraham's faith: Gal. iii, 7, 9, 26-29: Gal. iv—and they answer to the free born son of Sarah. God promised to be a God to Abraham and his seed. This was fulfilled in the letter, by his protecting Israel in Egypt—by his delivering them from bondage—by his taking them into Covenant at Sinai—and all his subsequent dealings with them in their generations, till they were cast off for their rejection of Christ. This promise was fulfilled in the Spirit, by God's being a God to all believers, and to them alone, (Rom. iv, 11, 12,) in a higher sense than he was to Israel: Jer. xxxi, 33. Another promise was, the land of Canaan; fulfilled in the letter to Israel, and in the Spirit fulfilled to the true Israel, in the possession of the heavenly inheritance.

The New Covenant is the foundation of a new creation, which embraces in its rich provisions of divine favour, Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free. If *any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*. We must

look into the blessings and privileges secured and given to us in the New Covenant, to learn what the blessings and privileges of true believers are, and which, by the grace of God, constitute them new creatures; as we must look into the Constitution of the United States, to learn the blessings and privileges of citizenship in the United States. Under the Old or Jewish Covenant the natural descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, possessed many distinguished privileges, and blessings, conferred upon them by God, their political King;—and the Old Testament Scriptures employ many forms of expression to represent them. The Jewish nation were said to have been *created, made, begotten and formed* by God, on account of their natural connection with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the twelve patriarchs, and their natural birth under the Old Covenant, by which they were citizens of the commonwealth of Israel. They were said to be a nation of kings and priests, and the people and kingdom of God, as expressive of the honors, privileges and blessings they possessed under God, in distinction from the Gentiles, who were called *no people, aliens, strangers, foreigners and enemies*.

The Old Covenant, however, with its priests and sacrifices, procured no actual remission of the sins of the soul, and gave them no spiritual blessings. These were reserved for the New Covenant, or the Covenant of the Spirit, and, as far as possessed, were derived by anticipation from it: Rom. iii, 25; Heb. ix, 15. The introduction and establishment of the New Covenant, destroyed all the proud distinctions that existed between the Jews and the Gentiles. By the law of God, all were concluded under sin, and the commission given to the Apostles was, to preach the Gospel *to every creature*, to Jew and Gentile, male and female, bond and free, as equally sinful and



helpless. The Jews, who had been born naturally under the Old Covenant, were *religiously* born of God, but not *of the Spirit*. They, therefore, must be born again, must be created anew, and made new creatures by God, agreeably to principles of the New Covenant, the Covenant of the Spirit, in order to their discerning and enjoying the Gospel Kingdom of God. However pre-eminent may have been the distinctions and honors conferred upon the natural descendants of Abraham, under the Old Covenant, in comparison to those enjoyed by the Gentiles, God says, in reference to the New Covenant, and the new heavens and the new earth, that the former, or the *old ones*, shall not be remembered, or come into his mind: Isa. lxxv, 17.

Paul, in comparing the Old Covenant and Jewish church with their ordinances and worship, with the New Covenant and Gospel church, and the spiritual blessings, and privileges, compares the former to Hagar and her bond son Ishmael, who was born after the flesh; and the latter, to Sarah and her free son, Isaac, who was born after the spirit. He observes, "Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman, was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory, for these are the two covenants: the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, [or the Old Covenant and Jewish church,] and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all, [which answers to the New Covenant and church of Christ.] For it is written, Rejoice, thou that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate [or deserted wife] hath more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children

of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free." Gal. iv, 22-31: Isa. liv, 1. The plain meaning of this allegory is this—that there is no more resemblance or affinity between the Old Covenant, and the Jewish church built upon it, composed of the natural descendants of Abraham through the twelve patriarchs, and the New Covenant, or the Covenant of the Spirit and the Gospel church built thereon, composed of all true believers in Jesus Christ who are born of God and born again, than there is between the flesh and the Spirit. The former are in the flesh, and in bondage to the law, and are under condemnation, and in that state cannot please God, although they may be the natural offspring of Abraham, or of believing parents. The latter are the spiritual seed of Abraham, having his faith, and are born of God by the incorruptible seed of the word believed, and are made free by the Son of God. These are Abraham's spiritual seed, and heirs according to the promise. They have Abraham's faith, and are blessed with faithful Abraham. The blessing of Abraham has come upon them, through Jesus Christ, and they have received the promise of the Spirit through faith. Owing to the rich blessings of the New Covenant, which are bestowed upon true believers in Jesus Christ, Jews and Gentiles, they are all new creatures, are born again, and born of God. By Jesus Christ, they that believe are justified from all things, from which the law of Moses could not justify them, and are taken into the divine favour. God hath given to us eternal life in his Son, and they that believe in him have eternal life.

The New Covenant, administered by Jesus Christ, in whom dwells the fulness of the God-head bodily, provides for, and will secure, the conversion of all the nations of the earth to God. The Old Covenant of *particularity*, secured the blessings of the Jewish theocracy to the Jewish nation, in the land of Judea. These blessings were only temporary and typical. But the New Covenant of *universality*, extends to the whole world. Under it, the heathen is given to King Jesus for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; by reason of his having tasted death for every man. The blessings of the New Covenant are spiritual and eternal, and have the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. All the promises of God, in it, are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. By its grace and blessings, if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature. Old things have passed away and all things have become new. Is not the *state* of that man a *new one*, in the sight of God, and is it not made so *by him*, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile, whose sins are pardoned, and who is received into the divine favour, and who loves and serves God in spirit and in truth? This is the condition of every man whose heart is purified by faith in Jesus Christ. He is begotten of God to a hope of another life, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and will be raised from the dead in the likeness of the Saviour.

Under the Adamic Covenant, broken by our first parents, we all became naturally mortal. Sin entered the world, and death by sin, and death passed upon us all because we all have sinned. But death is made a blessing under the New Covenant to every true believer. For, by the grace and mercy of God, given to us in Christ, under the New Covenant, we are to rise again, and leave the corruption, weakness and mortality of the first Adam in the

grave, and rise in the likeness of the second Adam, and be like him, spiritual, incorruptible and immortal. Our depravity, weakness and mortality, are owing to the *fact* of our union, by natural generation, with the first fallen Adam. After he fell, and lost the image and likeness of God, he begat children in his own likeness. Numbers in his descendants, and distance of time from him, do not weaken the power of corruption and death. Six thousand years find the minds and bodies of Adam's race as corrupt and mortal as were those nearest him. The fact of our connection with a fallen, depraved, mortal head, is that upon which our fallen, depraved, mortal nature depends. And the *fact* of our connection or union with Jesus Christ, the second Adam, by faith and a holy life, is that upon which, by the rich, gracious provisions of the New Covenant, our justification, sanctification, and eternal life depend. Those who are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, God has fore-ordained shall be conformed to the image of his dear Son, and be like him. As they have borne the image of the earthly Adam, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

The divine provisions of mercy and grace, given to us in Jesus Christ, and which are developed and imparted through his atonement and mediation, are the great discoveries of christianity. These discoveries at once bring into view God, as a God of justice, love and mercy, and perfectly harmonize all his attributes. Here justice asserts all its claims, and receives all its demands; holiness appears in its purest lustre; faithfulness in its most engaging aspects; while love beams with all its tenderness, and mercy shines forth with its most engaging attractions. Here, God and man are reconciled; the former by the removal of the cause of displeasure, by the propitiation of Jesus Christ; the latter by the destruction of his enmity

through the manifestation of the love of God in the gift of his Son, and the pardon or remission of his sins by the blood of the Lamb. The suitableness and efficacy of this heaven-derived cure, are felt by all who do truly and sincerely receive it. Here, by faith, they obtain relief from their sense of guilt and fear of punishment, while they experience, in the object of their faith and confidence, an absorbing and transforming power, which withdraws them from evil and selfishness, and produces a disrelish for them, and unites them to the gracious, good, and holy God in Christ Jesus, and makes them happy in his service.

The New Covenant and Gospel, unveil the glory of the invisible Creator and Redeemer, and present him before his creatures robed in all the beauty of holiness, and invested with all the charms of love, mercy and grace; and allure and persuade them to receive and submit to him as their God and Saviour. They bring him near without lowering him; they clothe him with condescension without degrading him; and they enthrone him in majesty without surrounding him with terror.

The Gospel of the New Covenant makes its appeal to the understanding and the conscience, to the feelings and the wants, to the hopes and the fears of mankind. It is thus that it carries with it the evidence that it originated in the wisdom, love, and grace of God. It bears on its own face a message of mercy and peace, to every creature. It furnishes a cure for every evil, and provides a remedy for every sorrow. It finds all mankind sinners, polluted and helpless, and proclaims remission of sin and eternal life to every creature, through faith in Jesus Christ, and infallibly bestows them upon every true believer.

## ESSAY VI.

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### ATONEMENT.

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The word *atonement*, in its original sense, always denotes some amends or satisfaction, for the neglect of some duty, or the commission of some fault or crime.

The sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, were an expiatory offering, appointed by God, on account of which, God's mercy and grace are communicated to us by the Gospel, and our sins are pardoned, and we are received into the divine favour. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes are we healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa. liii, 5, 6. The sentiment of the passage is made more perspicuous by the following translation:—

"He was wounded on account of our transgressions; he was smitten on account of our iniquities; the chastisement by which our peace is procured was laid on him; and by his wounds are we healed. All we, like sheep have gone astray; we have wandered each one in the path that he chose, and Jehovah hath laid on him the punishment due to us all."

This passage, and Jesus Christ to whom it relates, have been to the Jews a stumbling block, and to many of the Gentiles foolishness. The Evangelists and the Apostles

have told us that this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is a description of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, for the salvation of mankind. Philip from this passage preached Jesus to the Ethiopian Eunuch: Acts viii, 26-35. Peter has also applied a part of the chapter to the same distinguished sufferer. "Christ suffered for us—his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree—by whose stripes we are healed; for ye were as sheep going astray." 1 Peter ii, 21-25. Jesus Christ himself cites a part of Isa. liii; as containing a description of his own sufferings. "I say unto you, that what is written must be accomplished in me; And he was reckoned among the transgressors." Luke xxii, 37: comp. Isaiah liii, 12.

The sufferings and death of Christ, are everywhere represented in scripture, as the special procuring cause of our redemption; while his obedience is also represented as a concurring cause or ground of our salvation. His entire obedience or sinless perfection, was essential to his character as a substitute for sinners; for if he had himself sinned, instead of presenting an acceptable sacrifice for others, himself would have needed an expiatory offering. His expiatory sacrifice is the great point, on which rests the fact of the gospel proclamation of God's mercy to helpless sinners, our restoration to the divine favour, and a blessed and glorious immortality. When, therefore, I say, that *Christ in his sufferings was our SUBSTITUTE*, or, *by them he made an EXPIATORY OFFERING for us*, I mean, that *God did appoint and accept the sufferings of Christ instead of the punishment due to us, as sinners against his law; and that in consequence of this appointment, and of these sufferings, he communicates to us spiritual, gospel light, gives us faith and repentance, and forgives us our sins, and receives us to his favour.*

An attentive examination of the subject, under the

light of the scriptures, clearly establishes the *fact*, that the death of Jesus Christ was not only of divine appointment, but was that upon which the purpose and grace of God in the salvation of sinners of the human family were suspended from the beginning, and through, and by virtue of which, redemption and salvation with all their blessings are communicated, and Christ is glorified.

The following statements are taken from Prof. Stuart on the Atonement:—“*A substitute* is something put in lieu of another thing, and accepted instead of it. *An offering* is something presented to God. An offering which is acceptable to him, is one made by his appointment. An *expiatory* offering under the Jewish law, was a slain beast, presented to God by his appointment, and by a person who had been guilty of some offence, and incurred a penalty; in consequence of which presentation, the penalty for his offence, threatened by the law of Moses, was remitted, or the offender was pardoned. To say, then, that Christ made an *expiatory offering for us*, according to my apprehension of the meaning of scriptural language, implies that *his sufferings and death were, by divine appointment, accepted instead of the punishment due to us as sinners, and that God in consequence of the offering made by Christ, pardons our offences and receives us to his favour.* This, also, is just what I mean, when I say that *Christ, in his sufferings and death, was our substitute:*” And I would say, that in consequence of Christ’s sufferings and death, and of his offering himself as an *expiatory offering* to God, the New Covenant was procured and ratified, and is administered by Jesus Christ, as Mediator and High Priest, according to which the Gospel is preached, and faith, repentance and remission of sin, are communicated.

The atonement is not, properly speaking, *commercial*,



but *moral* in its nature and character. Christ, in his expiatory sufferings and death, was our substitute. A substitute may be, and where it is voluntarily accepted on the part of him to whom any debt or reparation is due, *must* be, an equivalent of some kind or other, a satisfaction in some sense, for such a debt or penalty due. But it may be equivalent or satisfactory, without being the same in kind or quantity as that in the place of which it comes. For, plainly, an equivalent is of two sorts. The first has respect to *kind* and *quantity*, and requires equality or sameness in regard to both. The second is, where the substitute answers the same *end*, as that would have done in the place of which it is put, or a higher end of the same nature. The first species of substitution or equivalency, belongs to various transactions of business among men; such as borrowing and lending, exchange of various species of property, and other things of the like nature.

Equivalency of the second kind, has respect to transactions of a civil or penal nature, and to the intercourse of rational beings with each other, as subjects of social or other laws. For example, banishment is often substituted by civil governments instead of inflicting the penalty of death; fines, instead of imprisonment or other corporeal punishment. In all transactions which have respect to a penalty, for any injury done, or any violation of law, where substitution is admitted with regard to the offender, that kind of equivalency which consists in the same quality and quantity, is out of the question. The *letter* of a penal law demands, that the offender himself, and no other, should suffer. But the *object* of the penalty — the ultimate and highest object of attaching it to the law — may be attained, perhaps, in some other way, and by substitution, even in a more effectual manner, than by a literal infliction of the punishment threatened. On the supposi-

tion that it can be, then if a substitute be admitted instead of literally inflicting the penalty, satisfaction may be truly said to be made, or an equivalent rendered, according to the common usage and understanding of all men, in respect to subjects of this nature. Indeed, the term equivalent has come by usage, most commonly to imply that the substitute does differ in some respects from that for which it is substituted.

If Christ died, then, as a substitute for sinners, it is not necessary to suppose, that his sufferings were the same in quantity and quality as would have been endured by those in whose room he suffered, in case the penalty of the law had been executed upon them. The sting of a guilty conscience—self condemnation and reproach, for having personally violated the just laws of God—the worm that never dies, and the cup of wrath without mixture which is drunk by sinners in the world of woe, the spotless Saviour never felt. To them his heart, which delighted in the law of God, and which was perfect purity, must have been a stranger. However high, then, his sufferings mounted, they could not have been the same in *kind* as those of the wicked in the world of misery. With regard to the *quantity* of his sufferings, we cannot assert, that they are the same with those they deserved whom he redeemed. The duration of Christ's sufferings was limited. He suffered, if we take his whole life as the period of them, but a few years. In his divine nature, considered as the *immutable God*, we cannot conceive of his having suffered; and, indeed, the scriptures always represent him as having assumed the *human* nature in order that he might suffer. Phil. ii, 6–8: Heb. ii, 9. Great as his sufferings were, yet they were not like those of the damned; sufferings of absolute and hopeless despair. He could look beyond them, when hanging on the cross.

He did, and promised the dying malefactor that he should be with him in Paradise that same day. He saw the glory and prosperity of his kingdom as the certain result of them. He had a resurrection from the tomb in full view; he anticipated his ascension to the throne of majesty on high, in order to become "Head over all things to the church," and the object of heavenly worship—in order to participate in "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was." For the joy set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame. Heb. xii, 2. However great, then, his sufferings were, we can hardly conceive of their having been the *same* with those which were due to sinners, for whom he suffered.

When, therefore, I say, that Christ in his sufferings was our substitute, I do not mean that those sufferings were the *same* in *kind* and *quantity* which constitute the torments due to sinners for whom he suffered.

Although it cannot be said, with strict propriety, that Christ did actually suffer torments, the same in *kind* and *quantity* as were due to sinners, it is impossible for us to ascertain how great his sufferings really were, or to comprehend them in all their relations and bearings. They were, by divine appointment, essential to the gospel dispensation as they were to the redemption of man. It was in reference to them, that the seed of the woman was promised at the fall to bruise the serpent's head, and that all the revelations and communications of God were made, through the long period of four thousand years before the advent of Christ, to our world. And it has been in consequence of his sufferings, that the New Covenant was made and ratified, that repentance and remission of sin have been given, that death has been abolished, and life and immortality have been brought to light. Through the cross of Christ, God manifests his justice and mercy,

his hatred to sin and its infinite demerit, and his love to the sinner, as it is by the faith of the cross the enmity of the human heart is slain, and through it the remission of sin is communicated, and the sinner is reconciled to God, and taken into his favour.

Jesus Christ died, not only *because* it was written of him, but, because it was appointed of God that he should die before it was written; and it was written because it was appointed, and was absolutely necessary in the divine purpose. It is a most unscriptural view of the subject, to place the sufferings of Christ which he submitted to and endured willingly, by divine appointment, and which were received by God for the redemption of sinners, upon the same footing with the sufferings of the Apostles and other good men. It was *because of Christ* and *his* cross, that *they* suffered and triumphed, as by *his* death *they* obtained life. God blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ, in whom they had redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Eph. i, 3-7: Col. i, 12-14.

Jesus Christ himself was advanced to the throne of his mediatorial glory through his own blood. He is the Saviour of sinners by virtue of his death. The redeemed in heaven fall down before the Lamb with their harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints, and sing the new song, saying unto him, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us, unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth; they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and therefore, are they before the throne of God, and serve him, day and night, in his temple. The

saints overcame the old serpent, the Devil and Satan, which deceived the whole world, who is the accuser of the brethren, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Rev. v, 8-10: vii, 14, 15: xii, 9-11. But we hear not one saint, in all the regions of glory, ascribing his redemption to his own blood, or to the blood of any other, by divine appointment, than to the blood of the Lamb.

"That Christ, in his sufferings, was our substitute, or, that by them he made an *expiatory offering* for sinners, is a matter of *fact*, and is revealed by the scriptures, without which it could not have been known. If philosophy wonders here, she has no right to scoff. If atonement, by the vicarious suffering and death of Christ, be a reality, it is one which the book of God only reveals. That this is the case, is a matter quite clear. It is a matter of fact, that substitution or vicarious sacrifice was of divine appointment, was admitted for nearly fifteen hundred years, under the Mosaical dispensation; to say nothing of expiatory sacrifices of the patriarchal ages. It was admitted, too, under the Mosaical economy, as a type of the substitution or expiatory offering of Jesus Christ. Paul has taught us, in the most explicit manner, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, that *all the expiatory offerings and sacrifices of the Jews, were typical of the great atoning sacrifice by the death of Christ; and that they were originally designed by God to be so.* It is a fact, that the blood of goats and bullocks were appointed by God, to be an expiatory offering for certain offences against the Jewish law, while, at the same time, this very offering was also a type of the sacrifice to be offered, in order to remove the punishment due to moral turpitude. He who brought a sin or trespass offering, and presented it to the Lord, was exempted from the sentence which the law of Moses

pronounced against the external offence that he had committed. The whole nation, as such, were freed from the penalty annexed to certain offences, on the great day of atonement, when the High Priest entered the most holy place, and presented the blood of the national offering or victim before Jehovah; not indeed from the punishment of a spiritual nature, due to sin, but from some penalty of an external nature, threatened in the present life. In a word, God, as the sovereign legislator and judge of the Jews, did, by the exercise of his supreme right, actually appoint sin and trespass offerings as expiatory sacrifices; which, being presented agreeably to his appointment, were followed by the real remission, on his part, of the penalty due to certain offences, and threatened by the law of Moses. So the Apostle himself states the subject—"The blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling those who were defiled, made expiation in respect to external purity;" that is, after the performance of such sacrificial rites, the Jews were regarded and treated, in regard to their external relations, as pure, or free from exposure to the penalty by the law of Moses. Heb. ix, 13. The fact just stated, cannot be called in question. We have only to open the book of Leviticus, and it is at once exhibited before our eyes."

The writers of the Old and New Testaments were Jews, and the scriptures, with very little exception, were addressed to Jews, or to churches which in part consisted of Jews. These must have understood the meaning of the sacred writers, and we must construe their language in the same way as the Jews would naturally construe it, who lived in the age of the Prophets and Apostles. What ideas, then, did the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Evangelists, mean to convey? The Jews were habitually conversant with *expiatory sacrifices* and *substitution*.

They were inwrought into the very nature of their religious worship; and all the scripture language, which has respect to the sacrifice of Christ, is directly borrowed from that which was every day read by the Jews, in speaking of the sacrifices that they were required to offer. To the Jews, God said, "the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;" Levit. xvii, 11. Paul to the Hebrews, says, that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission," and "if the blood of bulls and of goats, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?" Heb. ix, 13, 14. that is, *purify your heart*: Acts xv. 7-9. In Isaiah, it is asserted, in reference to Jesus Christ, "the chastisement or punishment by which our peace is procured, was laid upon him; that by his wounds we are healed; that all we have gone astray, that is, sinned; and that Jehovah hath laid upon him the punishment due to us." Isaiah liii. Other parts of this chapter repeat the same idea. "For the transgression of my people was he smitten; v. 8; his soul—that is, *he* was made an offering for sin;" 10; "he shall justify—that is, procure pardon for many; for he shall bear their iniquities;" 11; "he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors;" 12. In what sense did the Jews understand this language no one need be told. Peter quoted some of the passages that I have just cited. Observe how he comments on the sentiment, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree \* \* \* by whose stripes we are healed." 1 Pet. ii, 24. Again, "We were not redeemed with corruptible things \* \*

but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 1 Pet. i, 18, 19. John the Baptist also exclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world"—that is, the victim, who, by divine appointment, is, through his expiatory death, to procure pardon for men. John i, 29. So the Apostle John: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i, 7. "Who is the propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii, 2. Paul abounds everywhere with the most glowing sentiments in respect to this great point. "For he hath made him to be sin—that is, a sin-offering—for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God, in him." 2 Cor. v, 21–2. "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us:" 1 Cor. v, 7. "In whom we have redemption, in his blood, the forgiveness of sin." Eph. i, 7. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness—that is, for the manifestation of his pardoning mercy—for the remission of sins \* \* that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom iii, 24–26.

This last quotation deserves particular notice. It is asserted by some of the objectors to the atonement, that "if sinners are justified by the sufferings and death of Christ, or through him, as our expiatory sacrifice, there is no use for faith; for if Christ becomes the surety of sinners, and bears the punishment due to sin—sinners are clear whether they believe or not that he died for them:—that the sinners faith produces no effect whatever, in the matter of his justification. And that, in short, if Christ made an atonement, there is no gratuitous justification or for-



givenness at all in the case: the debt due, they say, was fully paid by the sufferings and death of Christ, and therefore there is nothing to forgive, or from which, a person can be freely justified by grace through faith." This objection arises "from regarding the atonement simply in a commercial, and not in a moral, governmental point of view. God, in the constitution and establishment of his system of salvation to man, had a right to limit the acquittal and pardon of the sinner as he saw fit. Agreeably to the Gospel, he "*justifies us freely by his grace, through the redemption there is in Christ Jesus, whom he has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.*" The death of Christ is, by the divine constitution of things, the foundation of this system of grace and love. It is inwrought into its very essence, and is essential to its existence, so that there is no Gospel without the atonement. Take away the death of Christ and all its consequences, as they have been manifested in the divine purpose, and by the conduct of God, in all that he has said and done since the fall of man, in promises and prophecies and institutions of worship, and in all that he is now doing, and will hereafter do, as revealed in the Old and New Testaments, and we have annihilated all spiritual and religious knowledge. Agreeably to the objections above noticed, the fact of the expiatory sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, in the view of those who entertain them, supercede the necessity of faith and repentance, and also the remission of sin through his blood; whereas they are the foundation, and the only foundation agreeably to the Gospel, upon which faith, remission and repentance are based. Those who foster the above objection to the atonement, preach grace and faith without the expiatory sacrifice, and atonement of Christ. They preach that God is in Christ, reconciling the world to

himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and they beseech sinners, in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, because God hath *not made Christ to be a sin offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* They thus preach reconciliation, and the righteousness of God *without, and in opposition* to Christ's having been made a sin-offering! And thus, they seem to me to preach grace and faith and salvation, upon principles which are in direct *opposition* to that one upon which, God, in the Gospel has placed them. They believe that God *who is above law, communicates grace without regard to law, and without Christ having redeemed sinners from the curse of the law!*

The appointment of the death of Christ, and the fact of it, must be distinguished from its effects in the economy of divine grace. His death is one thing, and our reconciliation to God by it is another, as his death is one thing, and the preaching of repentance and remission of sin are another.

The incarnation of the Word, and the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, his resurrection and his offering himself once for all, as an expiatory sacrifice to God, were appointed by God in the scheme of redemption and salvation. God prepared a body for him, for that very purpose. After Christ rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, he offered his crucified body to God as a sacrifice for us. This he did as our High Priest, and it was accepted; and this is the reason why repentance and remission of sin are preached and bestowed among all nations. Christ was exalted through his own blood a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins. This is the reason why Paul preached through him, the forgiveness of sins, and declared that by him, all that believe are justified from all things. Acts xiii, 38, 39.

Why is Christ now highly exalted in the mediatorial throne, and why has he a name given to him which is above every name, and has all power in heaven and in earth, but because he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, the death of the cross? Why is God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself by the Gospel, and not imputing unto them their trespasses, but because he hath made him to be a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? Phil. ii, 7-11. 2 Cor. v, 18-21.

The character and office of Jesus Christ as our sacrifice and High Priest were, and are, necessarily connected with what he said as our teacher, and with what he suffered as a martyr, when he sealed his testimony with his blood. All the gracious communications and blessings which God has made to, and bestowed upon our guilty world, since man fell, have been in reference to, and through, Christ *crucified*. Without him, we can neither know nor do any thing, as without faith it is impossible to please God. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. All the duties that God requires of us to perform, he requires of us to perform through faith in Jesus Christ; as by that we obtain the righteousness of God, and are interested in the divine favour. We are justified through faith in his blood, and the just by faith shall live.

The death of Christ was an event in the divine government, and, as a transaction in it between God and man, was most stupendous and wonderful. Its effects are eternal.—It was indeed, a mystery until it was revealed. When Christ expired on the cross—rose from the dead—and ascended into heaven—he changed the state of the universe! He exhibited the most awful ex-

pression of God's hatred to sin, and of its infinite demerits, and God's unspeakable love to sinners. The death of Christ, which was produced by our sins, abolished death. Through his cross, God reconciles the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses to them. By the blood of Christ, which was shed in consequence of the punishment of our sins being laid upon him, our sins, through faith in him are remitted, and we receive the promise of the Spirit, and are received into the divine favour, and are made heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

The expiatory sufferings and death of Christ, in our nature, and his offering of himself to God as a sin offering, were essential to God's making him both "Lord and Christ," as they are to his present glory and to the existence of the christian religion in the world. A true belief of these things is essential to a christian, as they are to the formation of the christian character. While the eternal Word, God manifest in the flesh, offered in our nature an expiatory sacrifice, through which, by the grace of God, faith, repentance, and remission of sin are procured and preached, the cross of Christ presents to the moral feelings and sympathies of our race, the only influence that can change the heart and excite it to piety and virtue, and inspire it with love to God and to holiness, and with opposition to sin.

The blessings of the New Covenant originated in the sovereign grace of God, but they come to us through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is through the redemption that is in his blood, that we have the *forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of God's grace: Eph. i, 7. The true *knowledge of God* is the knowledge of his glory in the face of Christ: 2 Cor. iv, 6: whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of

sins: Rom. iii, 25. And herein he appears to be a just God and a Saviour: Isa. xlv, 21. It is this discovery of God, that begets in the soul that reverence and godly fear of him, and supreme love to him, which *is his law written in the heart*, and the principle of all true obedience to it: 1 John iv, 9, 10, 19. 1 Tim. i, 5. John xiv, 23.

Though the remission of sins was procured for all true believers according to the New Covenant, when Christ offered the sacrifice of himself, yet they do not receive and enjoy that blessing till they believe the Gospel; for it is by faith in Christ's blood that they receive remission of sins, and are justified from all things (Acts x, 43: xiii, 38, 39); and being justified by faith, they have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ: Rom. v, 1. It is objected by some, to the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ and his expiatory offering, that what is said of him in these respects is merely by way of allusion to the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, and is only figurative. This is a denial, or subversion of the whole scripture record on the subject. Paul says, that "the law itself was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things (Heb. x, 1); that the gifts offered by the priests, according to the law, served unto the *example* and *shadow* of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God (Heb. viii, 4, 5); that is, the Levitical priesthood was a shadow of the priesthood of Christ."

Nothing can be more explicit or determinate than the following passage: "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin. Wherefore, when he (Christ) cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering" i. e. of bulls and of goats "thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. By the which will, we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Heb. x, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10. If the Old Covenant and law of Moses, and animal offerings, were a shadow of good things to come, where is the substance, or the good things themselves, if not found in the New Covenant, in the offering of the body of Christ and the Gospel?

## ESSAY VII.

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### TRINITY.

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The truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Jehovah, is essential to the existence of the christian religion, as is the atonement; so that we cannot say, that we have the Trinity and the atonement, *and* the christian religion. These, in their effects and consequences, in the developments they make of the divine existence and character, *are* the christian religion. The defenders and opposers of the atonement and Trinity, from the beginning of the controversies on these subjects, have been natural-religionists—that is, they have professed to know God without revelation. The assumptions and concessions which have been made on both sides of the question, in favour of natural religion, have superseded or destroyed the necessity of the atonement and Trinity, as they ever have been employed since the fall of man, in the manifestation of the existence and character of God to our guilty world.

The fact of the atonement, or of the vicarious sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, and of the Trinity, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in one Jehovah, are of pure revelation, as is the knowledge of God. The personal manifestations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are essential to the knowledge of the existence of God as he is revealed in the scriptures, and as he ever has been known to our world since the fall of man.

The fall of man lost for him the knowledge of God, and the communion with him which he possessed and enjoyed before he sinned. Since that period, "in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom has not known him; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed him," through the atonement. All the divine communications and manifestations which have been made to man by God, since the fall, have been made to him as a sinner, and have had reference to the atonement; and have been made by the Triune God, in a way that was suited to man's fallen state: and in reference to his redemption and salvation.

This is not a subject of doubtful disputation. There is a short and easy method of proving the truth, and the necessity of the atonement and of the Trinity, to the existence of the christian religion, which is the perfection of all religion.

If we exclude the expiatory sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, which is the atonement, and all that has been said and done by God in reference to it since the fall, and in consequence of it since his death, we shall find, that there has not been any religion, or any knowledge of God since the fall, except what Adam might have remembered of what he knew before and at the fall. There could have been no worship of God for a *sinner*, derived from what Adam knew from this source, because there was no mercy or grace in it.

If we exclude Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or *either of them*, and all that has been said and done by them, and in reference to them, and concerning them, in the revelations that have been made, which are found recorded in the Bible, and which exist in the traditions of the nations of the earth, we shall not have left one single idea of God, or one spiritual religious thought. Any person who



is at all acquainted with his own mind and its dependence upon external information for its ideas, can make the experiment. For example, exclude from the mind *the Father*, who so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son to redeem it, and all that we are informed of his love and will, and of what he said and did at and since the fall, and is now doing, and there is nothing left of spiritual knowledge or divine worship. Exclude *the Word* or *the Son*, and all that has been said and done by him, and concerning him in creation, promises and prophecies, and divine institutions, before his incarnation and advent; and exclude all that has been said and done by him, and concerning him since, and what he is now doing and will hereafter do, and we have again blotted out every thing concerning God and religion, which has been known since the fall. Our christianity, and all that went before it in promises and prophecies, in types and shadows, are annihilated, as is the knowledge of the *fact* of creation. Finally, exclude the Holy Spirit in all that he has said and done by way of manifestation concerning the Father, and the Son, and man's salvation, and we have again extinguished the whole system of spiritual thought and knowledge. There is not a name or an idea of God left.

All this proves that the existence, offices and agencies of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, whose personal manifestations have been made through the atonement, are necessary to the knowledge of the one true God, and to religious worship.

Idolatry, in every period of the world, has been owing to the corruption of original divine revelations and institutions, as all falsehoods have been perversions or corruptions of truth. Whether, therefore, men will, or will not, acknowledge that there is Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the one living and true God, they have, and can

have, no knowledge of God, without the Trinity in unity; nor have they any right to believe in God, nor to worship him, nor can they, without this doctrine and its effects. The existence of religion in the world, and particularly the christian religion, cannot be accounted for but by the fact of the existence and agencies of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These are all objects of faith. I mean, that they are made known, not by nature, but by revelation alone, in words and supernatural works. They are all *objects* of faith, as the doctrine revealed concerning them is the *doctrine* of faith. They are all revealed by God, in that system of truth which is embodied in his word. I will further state, that, agreeably to the result of the former investigation, if we exclude the words and sentences, the facts and statements, which compose the word or the revelations of God, and all the ideas, thoughts, sentiments and feelings, which have been produced by them, relative to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we have again destroyed every thing that relates to God and religion in the mind of man. Idolatry itself will be destroyed, as that is a corruption of an original, true revelation, and we shall be involved in Atheism.

A desire that the subject of the Trinity shall be fairly and fully investigated, induces me to introduce a dialogue here between a Unitarian and a Christian, in which the different views and arguments can be more plainly and satisfactorily exhibited.

UNITARIAN.—I object to the doctrine of the Trinity, because it subverts the unity of God, which is so clearly asserted in the scriptures: “To us there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” According to the doctrine of the Trinity, there are three infinite and equal persons, possessing supreme di-

vinity, called Father, Word or Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of these three persons, as described by Trinitarians, has his own peculiar consciousness, will, perceptions and actions. They exist in a state of society—they love each other, converse with each other, and delight in each other's company. They perform different parts in man's redemption, each having his appropriate offices, and neither doing the work of the other; the Son is the mediator, and not the Father; the Father sends the Son, and is not himself sent; nor is he conscious like the Son, of being made flesh; and the Father and the Son send the Holy Ghost. And thus we have, indeed, three persons who are three Gods; for it is a difference in properties, acts and consciousness, which indicate the existence, and lead us to the belief, of different intelligent beings.

I am aware, that there are two or three texts, and perhaps a few more, of scripture, in which Jesus Christ is called God, and there is a class of passages, not very numerous, which seem to ascribe divine properties to him. To these, however, I reply, that *“one of the most obvious principles of interpretation of scripture is, that language is to be explained according to the known properties of the subjects to which it is applied. These portions of scripture, in which Jesus Christ is called God, and divine properties are ascribed to him, we do not hesitate to modify and restrain, and turn them from their plain and obvious sense, because this sense is opposed to the known properties and nature of Jesus Christ.”*

CHRISTIAN. — The account you have given of the Trinity, is not altogether consistent with the views of those who believe in that doctrine. Indeed, you have done great injustice in some respects to their sentiments. In the essential unity of God, Trinitarians believe, while they believe in the personal manifestations of Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit, in Jehovah; these they believe because they are revealed. Unitarians are as much bound to retain, and use, and appropriate the scripture phraseology, in which the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with their adjuncts, is used as expressive of existences, qualities, and actions, as Trinitarians are.

You acknowledge, that there are passages of scripture in which Jesus Christ is called God, and some which ascribe divine properties to him. This is the reason why I say he is God. These, however, you say, Unitarians do not hesitate to modify, restrain, and turn from their obvious and plain sense and meaning, because this sense and meaning are opposed to *the known properties of Jesus Christ*. You, then, admit that according to their plain sense and meaning Christ is God. But, I ask you, what do you know of the nature and properties of Jesus Christ and of God, without revelation, or independent of the words and works of God; independent of the sense and meaning of God's word? I insist upon your answering this question before we proceed any further. If you design to reject the word of God, as the only means of information and faith in spiritual and religious matters, say so, and our investigation will be at an end—and you must return to the first dialogue.

UNITARIAN.—The first essays, and the first dialogue, have established the necessity of revelation in supernatural words and works, in learning spiritual and divine existences and things. I have been so much in the habit of regarding natural religion as true, and considering it as the foundation of the revealed, that it has exerted an influence upon my mind, perhaps not altogether just and proper, in forming my views of the nature and character of Jesus Christ, and, indeed, of the Trinity. If we exclude all that we learn from revelation of him, we shall,

of necessity, be compelled to regard him as Socinians and Deists do, as nothing more than a man, if we could know any thing of him at all. And if we view him under the light of revelation alone, it seems to me, that we ought to admit it in the full extent of its grammatical and historical meaning. I admit the Bible to be a revelation from God, and that it teaches original ideas. This was formerly proven.

CHRISTIAN.—There can be no compromise of any question that may arise relative to the atonement or the Trinity. These doctrines, in their various operations, manifestations, and effects, are christianity itself. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, and has all power in heaven and in earth, and a sinner is justified by faith in him. He is the only Saviour, and it is necessary that we have true views of his nature and character. But what is he without divinity and the atonement? And what do you know of these, or of any thing else appertaining to him, without revelation? Revelation makes known existences and things by nouns, verbs and adjectives, which are not known without them.

All the known properties of Jesus Christ, which enter into his nature and character as Messiah, and as the Saviour of sinners are manifested by revelation, and of course, whatever Unitarians, Arians, Socinians and Deists do, to modify, restrain, and turn from their obvious and plain sense and meaning, the passages of scripture which denominate Jesus Christ, God, and ascribe to him divine properties, is a flagrant violation and corruption of the truth: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whom he shall reveal him. \* \* \* This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." We all agree that the evi-

dences of the divine unity in the New Testament are sufficient; and yet the passages that assert it, are as few or fewer, than are those which assert or imply that Christ is truly God. Unitarians, according to your statement, will receive nothing from revelation, nor believe any thing taught by it, but in a sense which is according to what they previously knew without it. Agreeably to this view, revelation can teach nothing that they did not know before.

The personal manifestation of God the Word, his incarnation, his mediatorial character and offices, the life, sufferings and death, the resurrection and the present glory of Jesus Christ, the existence and agency of the Father and the Holy Spirit, and our own resurrection and future existence, and all the blessings and privileges that appertain to the New Covenant, cannot be believed, or received by Unitarians, agreeably to your principle of interpretation; because there is nothing previously known of them without the revelation by which they are manifested! Religion is not of human invention, and God has left no ground or occasion for any original, or new discoveries in religion. The whole system was completed when the last inspired penman wrote. The Unitarian, or Arian controversy about the Trinity, began in the fourth century. And I have no doubt but that error existed on both sides of the question. Had the disputants confined themselves to scriptural language, and to scriptural statements, and excluded, Platonic philosophy, and Platonic christianity altogether, which taught the notion that the knowledge of God was innate, when talking on the subject, the division with all its consequences which took place, could not have occurred. I desire to verify what I have now said, by exhibiting the Nicene Creed as published by the Council of Nice, and also the Arian Creed, as opposed to

it. From these I think it will appear that they both erred, and that had they been contented with the statements in the word of God, there could have been no division.

The Arian controversy about the Trinity, began in a dispute between Alexander and Arius, two Bishops of Alexandria in Egypt. Alexander affirmed, that there was "unity in the Trinity, and particularly that the Son was co-eternal, and consubstantial, and of the same dignity with the Father." Arius objected to this language, and asserted, that "if the Father begat the Son, he who was begotten must have a beginning of his existence; and from hence, said he, it is manifest there was a time when the Son was not." Religion was at that time under the protection of Constantine the Great, who had taken its orthodoxy into his own keeping. Under the pretext of supporting divine truth, Bishops were exasperated against Bishops, and all christendom became involved in a flame. They set the people together by the ears with so much violence, as to give occasion to the heathen to ridicule the Christian Religion upon the public theatres.

In the year 325, June 19th, the Great Council of Nice was called, by the authority of Constantine, and continued its discussions until August 25th of the same year, when they drew up and published the following Creed —

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten; begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father; God of God; light of light; true God of true God; begotten not made; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, things in heaven and things in the earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate and became man; suffered, and rose again the third day and ascended into the heavens,

and will come to judge the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost. And the Catholic and Apostolic Church doth anathematize those persons who say, that there was a time when the Son of God was not; that he was not before he was born; that he was made of nothing or of another substance or being, or that he is created or changeable." This is the Nicene Creed.

Arius, in his letter to Eusebius of Nicodemia, says, "We cannot assent to these expressions, always Father, always Son; at the same time Father and Son; that the Son always existed with the Father; that the Father had no pre-existence before the Son, not so much as in thought or a moment. But we teach, that the Son is not unbegotten or a part of the unbegotten. Nor is he made out of any pre-existent thing; but by the will and pleasure of the Father he existed before time and ages, the only begotten God, unchangeable, and that before he was begotten or made, or designed, or formed, he was not. But we are persecuted because we say, that the Son has a beginning, and that God has no beginning. For this we are persecuted, and because we say the Son is out of nothing; which we, therefore, say, because he is not a part of God, nor made out of any pre-existent thing." The Creed presented by Arius at the Council of Jerusalem in 335, was the following—"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, and in one Lord Jesus Christ his Son, begotten of him before all ages, God the Word, by whom all things were made, which are in heaven and in earth; who came down and was incarnate, and suffered and rose again, and ascended to the heavens, and shall come again to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost; the resurrection of the dead; in one Catholic Church of God, extending itself from one end of the earth to the other."



You have now the Nicene and Arian Creeds exhibited before you, from which it appears, that the whole controversy originated from the use of an unscriptural expression relative to Jesus Christ, or rather the Logos or Word. It was asserted on the one hand, that he was the *eternally begotten Son of God*, co-eternal and consubstantial, and of the same dignity with the Father. On the other, it was asserted by Arius as appears by the above document and others, that Jesus Christ, God's Son, was begotten of God before all ages, previous to which he had no existence, and was, after being begotten, God the Word, the only begotten God, by whom all things were made, and was afterwards incarnate. In his nature and character, he was as a superangelical Spirit, and came from heaven to inhabit a body which was prepared for him in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and was alone the soul that informed and enlivened it, and was in the place of a human soul in Christ.

Both sides asserted and took for granted, that the Logos or Word, who was in the beginning God, was *begotten*. One says, that he was the *eternally begotten Son*; the other says, that he was *begotten in eternity*, and on that account was called the Son of God. The scriptures never say, that the Word was begotten: and there is no authority from them to assert it. The scriptures say, that "in the beginning the Word was, that he was with God and was God, and created all things that were made." Here they leave us. We are not informed that the Word began at all. The scriptures say, that the Word was made flesh, and in his incarnate state manifested his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The angel Gabriel informs us *why* Jesus Christ should be born and called the Son of God, in his communication to Mary:—"the Holy Ghost shall

come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; *therefore*, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke i, 35. This had no reference to the origin, generation, or beginning of the Word himself in eternity, who in time became incarnate. The scriptures say nothing about the sonship of the Word in eternity, nor in time, but in reference to his incarnation in the economy of redemption, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and his being made heir of all things.

In the beginning the Word was God; he was God in eternity; and I would ask, in what did his essence differ from the essence of God?

UNITARIAN.—I cannot tell, for I do not know, because the scriptures do not inform me. This is an over-whelming subject to my mind.

CHRISTIAN.—So it is to mine, and so it is to the Angels in glory. I cannot tell a word about it further than the word of God informs me. The Logos began time by creating the heavenly bodies—before that all was eternity. He began creation by creating the first thing that was made. Unitarians and Trinitarians agree in the essential unity of God, and neither of them can tell anything more, than that the Word existed with God and was God. Of his mode or essence of being, they know nothing. The want of scripture evidence, that the Word began or was begotten, is a sufficient reason for our being ignorant on the subject, and for our saying nothing about them. The Seraphim veil their faces before him, and, instead of speculating about his beginning or essence, cry one to another, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory! Isa. vi, 2, 3, John xii, 41. Paul says, that he is God manifest in the flesh, and that, of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as

concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." Rom. ix, 5.

I have frequently remarked, that the *existence* of God is an object of faith, as I formerly proved. The unity of God can no more be proved without revelation than his existence can be; and the existence of God is revealed by the Trinity. Although the unity of God is a scripture doctrine, the scriptures have nowhere told us what the divine unity is. The *oneness* of God they assert. But this they do in opposition to the idols of the heathen—the polytheism of the Gentiles—the god's superior and inferior, which they worship. In no other sense have the scriptures defined the oneness of the Deity. What, then, is oneness in the uncreated, infinite, eternal Being, who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent? In created and finite objects, we have a distinct perception of what we mean by oneness, but can created objects be just and adequate representations of the uncreated ones, which we only know by faith. Familiar as the assertion is, that God is *one*, can you give me any definition of this oneness, except a negative one? You deny plurality of it, and say God is but one and not two or more. Still, I ask, in what does divine unity consist? Has not God different and various faculties and powers? Is he not almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, just and good? Does he not act differently or variously in the natural and the moral world? Does his unity consist appropriately in his essence? But what is the essence of God? And how can you assert that his unity consists appropriately in this, unless you know what his essence is, and whether oneness can be any better predicated of this than of his attributes? Your answer to all this is, that the nature of God is beyond your reach. The assertion, then, that God is one, does nothing more than deny the numerical plu-

ality of God. Blind Bartimeus is limited in his knowledge of light by what he is taught, and so are you in what you know of God by his revelation. Here all investigation ends. The sense and meaning of the words and sentences are ultimate; if you know them, you know all that can be known in your present state. You cannot tell what constitutes the *internal nature* of the divine essence or attributes, or how they are related to each other, or what internal distinctions exist. About this revelation says nothing, and about it, for that reason, we can think and know nothing, and ought to say nothing. God is one. This denies polytheism and never can reach beyond this. It does not prove, that there are no distinctions in the Godhead, either in regard to attributes or essence, the nature of which is unknown to us, and the existence of which is to be manifested and shown by revelation alone. And yet, after that distinction is revealed, if I be required to say what it consists in, I reply, that I do not know and cannot tell; but I find no more difficulty in believing in the three-fold distinction in the godhead than in believing in the divine existence and unity. Without the personal manifestation and distinction, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as they are connected with the atonement, and without their effects in the scriptural enumeration of them, I could not have the knowledge of God at all, under the present state and order of things, as far as I can judge, because I should have no revelation.

Resolving all into scriptural authority, it does appear to me, that the passages are at least as numerous, which assert that Christ is truly divine, as they are which assert the divine unity. The knowledge of the one true God, I repeat, is not attainable without the Trinity, as he is known to our world. Take away either of the persons, and his agencies and manifestations, and you blot out from our world the knowledge of the one God.

Unitarians and Trinitarians have been natural religionists since the controversy commenced. They professed to know God, without revelation, by their own wisdom, and then formed their systems to suit their pre-conceived opinions. This was the cause of their passion and violence. The enlightening, purifying, and sanctifying influences of the Gospel of God's grace, through which, God manifests himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were lost, by that Gospel having been superseded and nullified by their false philosophy—and this is the case now, more or less, with all the natural religionist christian sects. O, what rashness marks the speculations and conduct of vain, ignorant, sinful man, who dares to rush in where angels fear to tread!

Unitarians and Trinitarians, I repeat, agree in the essential unity of God, and neither of them can tell anything more, than that the Word existed with God, and was God, at the beginning. Of his mode or essence of being they know nothing, because the scriptures tell us nothing. The incarnation of the Logos, was the fulfillment of the declaration of the word of God by Isaiah, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isa. vii, 14. This, compared with Mat. i, 21–23, teaches us, that Immanuel is Jesus the Saviour, God with us. His incarnation was also a fulfillment of the declaration of God, Isa. ix, 6, 7—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David." The incarnation of the Word is a *fact*, but of the *how*, or the *mode* of that fact, we know nothing: "Great is the mystery of Godli-

ness; God was manifest in the flesh." He is denominated "the only begotten Son of God; and his dearly beloved Son."

If you ask me, what is the distinction in the godhead between the Father and the Son, wherein the word Son is applied to the incarnate Word, who was before called God, and in whom the fulness of the godhead dwells bodily? I answer, that I do not know. The fact that a distinction exists, is what the scriptures state; the definition of that distinction is what I shall by no means attempt. As far as the humanity of Christ, or the faculties and qualities of the man Christ Jesus are concerned, I could exhibit what the scriptures predicate of him. But what shall I, or can I define the incarnate Logos to be? What simile drawn from created objects — objects of time which are necessarily derived and dependent, — can illustrate the nature or the mode of the existence in that being who is their Creator, who is underived, and has no relation to time except as its Creator and preserver; who was in the beginning God; who is before all things, and by whom they consist? I cannot advance one single step in explaining what the distinction is, between the Father and the Son. I believe the fact that it exists, as much as I believe the fact that God exists, and for the same reason, because it is revealed. If the scriptures reveal the fact, that there are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which lays the foundation for the use and application of the personal pronouns *I, thou, he, &c.*, which render it proper to speak of sending and being sent, of Christ being with God, being in his bosom, and other things of the like nature, it is like every other fact, to be received simply on the credit of divine revelation; and so of the Holy Spirit. The passages which assert the Father and the son to be one, and the Father to be in the Son, and the Son in the Fa-

ther, are to be believed on the same account, and they are to be worshipped in that relation.

Although the sonship of Christ always includes the Logos, in which the natural, original, and essential dignity of his person consists, yet it does not appear from any thing that I can see, that he is called in scripture *the Son of God*, merely *as God*, or on account of his being the Logos, or to teach us the origin or manner of his personal existence in the Godhead; but it seems to be applicable to him as Immanuel, the Word made flesh, or God manifest in the flesh.

The whole Arian controversy seems to have had reference to, and to have been made to bear upon, the *essence* of Deity, and to have had but little to do with the salvation of man and spiritual holiness. Whereas, the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the atonement, and the doctrines of grace, which are these doctrines extended, and applied to the knowledge of God and man's salvation, are not intended to make us philosophers, or to teach us the essence of Deity, but to make us christians, or to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ, and to transform us into his image. These doctrines, in their operation upon the intellect and the heart, are intended to enlighten our ignorance, to teach us the existence and character of God, and to restore us to him by his grace, through the remission of our sins and the sanctification of our nature; they are intended, *as means*, to bring us into the favour and to make us like God. It is not considered, that the forms of expression and the actions associated with them, by which Christ is represented as coming from the Father, and being sent by him, and going to him, and residing in heaven, while he was upon the earth, and such like, are the very means by which the ideas of the Father and the Son, and our know-

ledge of the whole system of spiritual and eternal things, are made known, which constitute the religion of Jesus Christ. All these things are done in *accommodation* to our fallen, limited state. Without them we could know and think nothing of spiritual things. With all the light we have from these sources, we see but through a glass darkly, and see only by faith, as blind Bartimeus sees. What we see is by the evidence of things not seen. What God is, essentially in himself, or what he is beyond and apart from the three-fold personal manifestation, of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or the grammatical and historical meaning of the nouns, verbs, and adjectives, which he has employed to represent himself, or to make known what may be known of him by us, and which are written for that purpose, I know not. These manifestations and representations have been made by himself. This, I assert, because their existence cannot be otherwise accounted for, and we are, on that account, bound to receive them in their appropriate meaning and signification, and to cherish the ideas, views, affections, and conduct, which they impart and inculcate. Every person who is baptized, is baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," by which he professes to believe them as does the administrator, and to come under the authority of God as Saviour.

The Trinity is also recognized by the apostolic form of benediction in 2 Cor. xiii, 14, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."



## ESSAY VIII.

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### DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

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The Divinity and Humanity of Jesus Christ—Dr. A. Clark's view of the Atonement and Sonship of Christ.

I will give a concise view of the manner and matter of the proof, that Jesus Christ is both divine and human. This is a subject of pure revelation, and the word of God is the only means of information.

The following is the process, by which I arrive at what I know of the natures and offices of Jesus Christ. As the subject of a proposition is known by its predicates, all that I have to inquire into is, has the word of God ascribed a nature truly and properly human to Jesus Christ; and has it ascribed also a nature to him truly divine? If it has, I must believe him to be really a man, and I must believe him also really divine or renounce my pretension to a belief in revelation altogether. In this case there is no *a priori* reasoning or knowledge.

It is declared in the most explicit manner, that Jesus Christ was born a babe and grew up to manhood. It is essential to a man that he have a human body and a human soul. A body is as essential to a man as a soul is, and a soul is as essential as a body is. Accordingly it is predicated of Christ, that he was to be born of Mary, a child, that he had the members and parts of a human being, and that he had a human soul. He is called the *last Adam*, in

comparison with *the first Adam*. It is alleged of him, that he increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man, the same that was said of Samuel and John the Baptist. 1 Sam. ii, 26. Luke i, 80—that he hungered and ate, that he thirsted and drank, laboured, was fatigued and rested, slept, rejoiced and sympathized with his brethren and countrymen, and wept; was in an agony and exclaimed, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death!” that he was wounded, and bled and died; was buried and rose from the dead. Now it seems to be impossible that all these things should be really and truly predicated of Christ as a man, and yet that he should not be a man, soul and body. It is also predicated of him, that he was begotten by the power of the Holy Spirit; and though a man he was without sin; this is as easy to be conceived of, as is the creation of the first man. Adam was as really a man, soul and body, before he sinned as he was afterwards.

Notwithstanding these predicates of human nature in respect to Jesus Christ, which ascertain him to be truly and properly a man, soul and body, the disciples of Arius, to avoid what they called a difficulty, in the idea of God the Word dwelling in, or being united to the man Christ Jesus, and to get clear of what they call a mystery, reject the fact altogether that he had a human soul, and assert, that he possessed nothing that was human but a body, and that the Word, who they allege was *made* in eternity, supplied the place of a soul. It is to me, however, far more mysterious—it is more, it is a contradiction, if the above things are predicated truly of Jesus Christ as a man, and yet that he should not be a man.

If the evidence that Christ was really a man, be not complete from his birth, actions, affections, sufferings and death, and from his own affirmations respecting himself, I

cannot see how it can be proved that he existed at all, or that he ever was made a sin-offering for us, or that he now exists in heaven. The subject however, is known by its predicates. If Christ as a man and the spotless Lamb of God, was set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, which are clearly stated in the scriptures, it deserves serious consideration whether or not those who regard him otherwise, do not misapprehend the righteousness of God altogether. Some have rejected the divine nature of Jesus Christ, because they could not see *how* a union of the divine and human nature could take place, while they affected to see how a human body was united to a soul not human;—they could see how the powers, faculties, affections, passions and feelings which are powers and affections of the human soul, could exist and be manifested without the human soul. To what order or class of beings he belongs, they have not told us. They call him the Son of God; so do the scriptures, but the scriptures also denominate him the Son of man. The objectors deny to him the nature and properties which are predicated of him by the scriptures, both as man and God, and which constitute him what he is.

Still the subject of a proposition is known by its predicates. It is predicated of Christ, that he is not only man, but that he is also the eternal God, that he was in the beginning *with God, and was God, and is over all, God blessed FOREVER—that he created all things visible and invisible that were made; that he is before all things and by him they consist.* And that while he was in the world he did the works of God, that he healed the sick, and raised the dead. It is predicated of him moreover, that he is omnipotent, and omniscient, and is God manifest in the flesh. He is also an object of universal worship, is to be honoured as the Father is honoured, and

has promised that all over the world, and at all times, where two or three are gathered together in his name, or on his account, he is in the midst of them.

The Word made flesh, in his two-fold nature of God and man, is the Creator of the new heavens and of the new earth, which will be more durable and glorious than was the first or old Creation, which the Word, in his one-fold nature as God the Word, created. In order to the new creation, the Word was made flesh and established the new covenant through his own blood, which has procured and imparts remission of sin to every true penitent believer in him.

Unitarians and Arians have erred in two ways; they have erred by assuming the knowledge of God, or the power to know him without revelation, as all Deists and natural-religionists do, and by *partially* reading the scriptures in regard to the natures and character of Jesus Christ.

It is as obvious as day light, that many things are ascribed to Christ, which will neither agree with his humanity or divinity separately, but will agree with both unitedly. They, mistaking these things, have conceived of him as neither man nor God, while he is both. "Unto us a child is born;" this does not belong to him as divine; "And his name shall be called the Mighty God;" this does not belong to him as a man. The same two-fold nature is ascribed to him by Paul. "From the Father Christ descended in respect to the flesh, who is God over all, blessed forever, Amen." Rom. ix, 5. Man is a spiritual and a material being; spiritual as to his immortal soul; material as to his body. Yet no confusion is produced by this conjunction: both retain their respective properties. It is not the body that thinks and reasons; and it is not the soul that eats and drinks. It is

not the humanity of our Lord, that is every where present; and it was not his divinity that was crucified. He died as a man. He fills all things as God. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." I cannot explain the *mode* of this, but I assert the fact because the scriptures assert it, and it brings down the Deity, in the manifestation of his mercy, grace and love, to our apprehension and condition. We are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption there is in Christ Jesus, whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," and now exhibits him as our Saviour and sympathizing friend:

"While Jews on their own law rely,  
And Greeks of wisdom boast,  
I love the incarnate mystery,  
And there I fix my trust."

In the beginning of creation *the Word was*. His existence was a *divine existence*, for the name of God was given to him—"the Word was God"—creation was ascribed to him; "All things were made by him; and without him was there not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." Could all this be affirmed of him without his being God? Had he been but a man, or an angel, or a superangelical creature, would John have expressed himself in a way so proper to lead men into error or idolatry—telling us that he was not only with God, but that he was God, and making him the fountain of all light, life and being? If he be not God, it is idolatrous to worship him, and idolatry is the thing that God hates. The Prophets and Apostles have said enough to entitle him to all adoration and praise, and they did themselves worship him.

"The Word was made flesh," that is, "The Word was made man, and, as Dr. Campbell renders it, he became incarnate." But he did not cease to be what he *was*, in

becoming what he was *not*. Here is union but not transformation, or confusion. He was God before he was in the flesh, and he was God when he was in the flesh, and he was God manifest in the flesh. He assumed our nature (pure) into personal subsistence with his own. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise himself also took part of the same. He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham."

The following are Dr. Clark's observations on the *Atonement* and the *Sonship* of Jesus Christ. He speaks of himself in the third person.

"It was a strong article in his creed, that the *passion and death of Christ, were held out through the whole of the New Testament, as sacrificial and expiatory*; and his death was a sufficient ransom, sacrifice, and atonement for the sin of the world: for He by the grace of God had tasted death for every man. This doctrine was the only basis of his hope; and yet he had not that faith, by which he could lay hold on the merit of that sacrifice, for his personal salvation. Were this foundation to be destroyed, what could he do, or where flee for refuge? How it was shaken in his mind, I am about to relate.

"He had long been intimate in the house of a very respectable family in the neighborhood. He was there as their own child, for him they had a very strong affection, and he felt for them in return, both affection and reverence. One evening the conversation turned on the *Doctrine of the Atonement*; and some observations then made, filled his soul with doubts and fears. It was in short stated, by one present, that "The Methodists were guilty of idolatry, for they gave that worship to Jesus Christ, that belonged to the Father only." He came home full of confusion: "What have I been doing? Have

I been adding *idolatry* to all the rest of my transgressions? Have I had two Gods instead of one?" He went into a private place and kneeled down and began to ask pardon of God, fearing that he had given that glory to another, which was due to Him alone. He was not satisfied however with *this*; he thought he would go farther, and leave the *name of CHRIST* out of all his prayers; this proceeded so far that he did not like to converse about him. What he had lately heard, represented him to his mind as a usurper; and at last he could not bear to see his name in any religious book. Darkness now entered into his mind, his spiritual fervor gradually diminished, till it was at last entirely gone. He prayed, but it was a *form*—he read, but it was without *unction*. He felt this lamentable change, and began earnestly to inquire where it had arisen? Importunate prayer, his former refuge, was again suggested to his mind as the only help; for he had none to whom he could open his heart. In secret he fell down before his Maker, and prayed earnestly for deliverance from his present state of darkness, ignorance and doubt; he concluded his prayer by saying "have mercy upon me, *for the sake of JESUS CHRIST!*" These last words had no sooner dropped from his lips, than he started as if alarmed for himself, "What! have I been again praying in the name of *Jesus*? Was this right?" Immediately his soul was filled with light, the name of *Jesus* was like the most odoriferous ointment poured out, he could clasp it to his heart and say, "Yes my only Lord and Saviour, thou hast died for me,—by Thee alone I can come unto God,—there is no other name given from heaven among men, by which we can be saved! Through the merit of thy blood, I will take confidence and approach unto God!" He now felt that

he was delivered from those *depths of Satan*, by which his soul was nearly engulfed.

“This narrow escape from sentiments which would have been fatal, if not finally ruinous to him, he ever held as a most special interference of God; and he always found it his duty to caution men thoroughly against the *Arian* and *Socinian* errors. It was this, without any suggestions from man, led him to examine the reputed orthodox, but spurious doctrine of the *Eternal Sonship of Christ*; which he soon found, and has since *demonstrated* that no man can hold, and hold the *eternal unoriginated nature* of Jesus Christ. For if this *divine nature* be in *any sense* whatever *derived*, his eternity, and by consequence his *Godhead*, is destroyed; and if his *Godhead*, then his *Atonement*. On this point, he has produced a simple argument in his note on Luke i, 39, which is absolutely unanswerable. The argument is simply this:—

“1. If Christ be the *Son of God*, as to his *Divine Nature*, then he cannot be *eternal*, for *Son* implies a Father; and Father implies, in reference to *Son*, precedence in *time*, if not in nature too. *Father* and *Son* imply the notion of *generation*, and generation implies a *time* in which it was effected; and *time* also *antecedent* to such generation. 2. If Christ be the *Son of God*, as to his *Divine nature*, then the Father is of necessity *prior*, consequently in Godhead *superior* to him. 3. Again, if this *Divine nature* were *begotten* of the *Father*, then it must have been in *time*, i. e. there must have been a period when it *began* to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his *Godhead*. 4. To say that he was *begotten from all eternity*, is absurd, and the phrase, *Eternal Son*, is a positive self-contradiction. Eternity is that which had no beginning, and stands in no reference to *TIME*—*SON* supposes *time*, *generation*, and



*Father*, and time also *antecedent* to such generation, therefore the theologic conjunction of these two terms, *Son* and *eternity*, is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

“The reader will see from this case, which I have circumstantially related: — 1. How dangerous it is for young converts to go into the company, not merely of the ungodly, but of those who are given to doubtful disputations. 2. How completely subversive it must be to a penitent soul, to frequent the company of those, however decent and orderly they may be in their conduct, who deny, as a vicarious atonement, the Lord that bought them. Take away this foundation and it is utterly impossible for any true *penitent* to entertain any hope of mercy. 3. People may hold this doctrine, who never felt the guilt of sin, their own sore, and the plague of their own heart; but let a man see himself a *sinner*, contemplate the infinite purity and justice of God, and the awful strictness of his *law*; and then he will feel that in heaven, in earth, in time, in eternity, there is neither hope nor help for his soul, if he have not a sacrifice to bring to the Divine Majesty, of merit sufficient to atone for all his crimes, and give him a right to an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

“It is trifling with conscience to talk of confiding in the *Divine benevolence*, while the fragments of a broken law, are every where lying under the sinner’s feet.” — *Account of the life of Adam Clarke.* pp. 95–7.

## ESSAY IX.

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### GRACE AND FAITH.

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The grace of God as a *system of religion*, comprehends the one grand scheme of the divine favour, operation and influence, which originated in the purpose and love of God, and is developed by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, through the atonement of Jesus Christ, by which man is restored to the image and enjoyment of God. This system, or plan of divine grace or favour, is, as far as it is connected with the salvation of believers, embraced and comprehended in the New Covenant, and is administered by Jesus Christ as the Mediator of it. This system is alluded to in Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who loved us and gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Tit. ii, 11-14. *Grace* sometimes signifies the *state* into which the gospel, by its appropriate, divine effects and influences, brings the sinner and ungodly man through true faith and repentance. Sometimes it means *the divine influences* of the gospel upon the heart, in producing faith, repentance, hope and love, which are sometimes called the influences of the Spirit.

Grace also, Parkhurst observes, denotes the gracious and unmerited assistance of the Holy Spirit, in his miraculous gifts—he adds, “But although I firmly believe in his blessed operations and influences, on the hearts of ordinary believers, yet that grace is ever in the New Testament used particularly, for these, is more than I dare, after attentive examination, assert.” The blessed operations and influences of the Spirit, exerted upon the hearts of ordinary believers—and there are none but ordinary ones now—are, by and through the truth of the gospel of God’s grace, which was revealed and confirmed by his miraculous gifts, believed and cherished in the heart, and practised in the life. The supernatural and miraculous revelations and gifts of the Spirit, by which it was revealed, sealed and confirmed, and which give a divine gracious character to the gospel, have long since ceased.

The word of God’s grace, thus revealed and confirmed, is the divinely established means, through which the blessed operations and influences are exerted upon the hearts of all true believers. And these are the gracious influences of the Spirit.

#### FAITH.

By revelation we know that the *objects* of faith exist, but the *mode* or *manner* of their existence, or, if created, the mode or manner of their *creation*, is totally inscrutable and incomprehensible to the human mind, as much so as is the mode or manner of the existence of light and vision, to the mind of blind Bartimeus.

The only formal definition of faith, in a *scriptural theological* use of the term, that we have in the word of God, is the following, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. xi, 1.

This definition is plain, and agrees exactly with all that the scriptures say on the subject. The *objects* of faith are things hoped for, things not seen. Things hoped for are future good things, or they could not be objects of faith or hope. Faith is the *evidence* or *conviction* of things not seen. Things not seen are more numerous and comprehensive than things hoped for. They include not only things promised, but also things testified; John iii, 33: 2 Thess. i, 10; not only good things to be hoped for, but evil things to be dreaded; Heb. xi, 7; not merely future things, but things also past, and present; Heb. ix, 6. It is, however, common to them all, that they are things not seen, and are only known by revelation; for it is only unseen things, that can properly be objects of faith; and hence faith is opposed to sight or sense. 2 Cor. v, 7; Heb. xi. 3; 1 Pet. i, 8. Faith in its theological sense, as has been formerly proven, is produced by the word of God, as it reveals or makes known things not seen by sense, or which cannot be inferred from nature, or natural appearances. Rom. x, 17; Acts xvii, 11, 12; 1 Cor. ii, 11, 12, 13. Things which are known by nature, reason or experience, without revelation, are not scriptural objects of faith.

Divine faith is the belief of divine revelation and testimony. This faith is the belief of the truth of whatever God is pleased to reveal, and which, but for his revelation had not been known. Human faith rests upon human testimony, as divine faith rests upon divine testimony; it is the same mind that believes both, and it partakes in its *states* of the nature and qualities of the objects believed, as it perceives them.

It is reasonable to believe, what God has revealed, and testified, because it is *truth*, for God cannot lie.

The conviction that is in divine faith or belief, is not a

blind enthusiastic fancy, or the working of a weak credulity. When a man *really* believes, his mind will be affected by the objects of his belief, according to their perceived natures, and the relations they bear to him, and he to them. "He acteth differently upon that, which each passage of scripture containeth, if it be faith in divine things, yielding obedience to the commandments, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God, for this life and that which is to come."

If what a man believes appears to him evil, disagreeable or hurtful, it will excite his hatred, aversion, or fear; but if it appears to him excellent and true, amiable or beneficial, it will draw forth his esteem and confidence, love, desire, hope or joy. These dispositions, passions and affections evidently suppose the previous perception and belief of what excites them; these are therefore not faith but the effects of it. Though faith is the confidence, or *substance*, of things hoped for, and also, in the christian's heart, worketh by love, yet it is neither hope nor love, for the Apostle distinguishes it from both; "Now abideth faith, hope and love, these three." 1 Cor. xiii, 13.

Noah, by faith of God's warning respecting the flood, was moved with fear to prepare the ark, (Heb. xi, 7,) yet this fear was not faith but the effect of it, as was his labour in building the ark, and preaching righteousness.

The objects of faith are different, and when believed, they produce different effects upon the mind, corresponding with their perceived natures, and the relations the mind bears to them. *True faith is the belief of the truth*; and *saving faith*, is the belief in Jesus Christ the *Saviour*, by the testimony that God has given of his Son. By faith we *know* that God is, but the belief of this alone, does not save. Saving faith is called by the Apostles "Believing with the heart unto righteousness." Christ

is the object of it; he is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe.

Edwards says, as the conclusion of all his inquiries, "the best and clearest and most perfect definition of justifying or saving faith, and most according to the scriptures, that I can think of, is this: faith is the soul's entirely embracing the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour."

Saving faith embraces or receives Jesus Christ, for justification. This faith works by love, as it is that by which God purifies the heart. This faith understands *the truth*, believes it, acknowledges it and practices it. Speculative faith, that, is faith which produces no purifying practical effects, consists in the superficial belief of a few truths detached from their connection with the more essential parts of revelation. These in their nature, are not suited to produce, and are incapable of producing, purifying effects. The faith of such a believer does not embrace the essential truths of the gospel, which operate to the saving of the soul. As it does not justify the person, and there is no wonder that it does not produce the fruits of righteousness.

Some describe faith to be an inward principle of grace, implanted in the heart by the operation of the Spirit, separate from, and previous to, the knowledge of the word of God. It is impossible to conceive what is meant by such a principle of grace as this. It cannot be any sentiment respecting Christ or his salvation, since it is supposed to be previous to the knowledge and belief of the word of God, wherein alone Christ is revealed. Nor can it be any disposition or affection of mind towards Christ; for the mind cannot be affected by any object with which it has no knowledge. *Faith is the belief of the truth or of God's word. The word of God's grace, is the very thing*

*that is established in the heart by faith.* Sinners cannot love God *in their sins*. Christ by the gospel is presented to them as the object of their faith, the *first object* that meets the eye of their mind; and their sins are remitted by faith in him. And "being justified by faith, they have peace with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ." When men conceive faith to be a principle wrought in the heart, by the Spirit abstract from the Word, it will lead them to look within themselves for the operation of some spirit, very different from the Spirit of truth, who speaks in the scriptures, whose work it is to guide into all truth, to speak of Christ, and to glorify him. It will make them seek after this inward principle, *in the first instance*, as the main hinge of their hope without the Word, and prevent them taking any comfort from it, till they fancy they find this unscriptural principle wrought in them, which after all, seems to be only a principle of blind enthusiasm or self-conceit.

When faith is confounded with its effects, and made to consist of a number of good dispositions, and vigorous exertions of the mind, it limits the extent, and clouds the immediate freeness of divine grace to the chief of sinners, by confining it to such as are supposed to be better disposed and qualified than others. It sets the gospel ground of hope, at a distance from those who are self-condemned, who cannot find such good dispositions in themselves, and puts them upon striving to attain them by some great exertion of mind, and perhaps body, in order to be justified. The consequence is, that they either become discouraged and sink into despondency, or fall into despair after much fruitless labour, or if they obtain any fluctuating peace in this way, it is not founded on, or derived from what they believe concerning Christ, but from a better opinion of themselves. There

is a wide difference between believing "that God will justify only such as are well disposed, and properly qualified by their own good deeds and protracted efforts;" and believing "that he justifies the ungodly freely, by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. iii, 24; iv, 5. The former leads a man to seek relief to his guilty conscience, and peace with God from something to be wrought in him, or done by him, distinct from faith in and reliance upon Jesus Christ. The latter leads him directly to the character and atonement of Christ, as the sole foundation of his justification, and of his hope and peace with God. On him he believes, and receives him for wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption—his faith is produced by, and is resolved into, the record that God has given of his Son.



## ESSAY X.

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### JUSTIFICATION.

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The justification of a sinner and ungodly man, is by faith without works:—the justification of a righteous or godly man, is by works, and not by faith only.

The gospel doctrine of the justification of sinners or ungodly men, as distinguished from the justification of saints, is the same as the doctrine of the remission of sin, of the forgiveness of sin, or of pardon and acquittal, and is called the righteousness of God.

The justification of a sinner, is by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, and is by the divine constitution of the New Covenant, based in the atonement, or the expiatory sufferings and vicarious death of Jesus Christ, which he submitted to willingly, and endured by divine appointment; “God hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” “He humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the cross.” 2 Cor. v, 21: Phil. ii, 8.

The doctrine of justification, claims to itself a sort of precedency and pre-eminence over all other doctrines, as being the one in which all the other doctrines of grace unite.

A person, who is wrong on the subject of gospel justification, will scarcely be right in any other which is connected with it. Wrong views of the doctrine of justification, are usually connected, either with light and trifling

views of sin, and of human depravity and corruption, and erroneous views of the atonement of Jesus Christ, or with wrong views of the gospel method, by which the grace of God, is applied for the justification of sinners. In the former case the expiatory sufferings and sacrifice of Christ, are often rejected altogether, and reliance is placed upon a few external rites and ceremonies for salvation, without any deep affecting views of sin, or scriptural views of its remission. In the latter case, persons are often truly convinced of sin, and feel the want of the remedy which the gospel has provided, but mistaking that remedy, instead of believing and trusting in Jesus Christ, for righteousness and salvation, they seek the divine favour by agonizing and striving, and waiting for the operations of the Spirit to relieve them, before they believe in Jesus Christ. This is confounding justification with sanctification. No operation of the Spirit will ever bring peace to the soul of an awakened sinner *in his sins*, according to the gospel. The sinner must be justified by faith in Christ—his sins must be pardoned through faith—he must be acquitted, before he can have peace with God. This pardon and acquittal is not effected by the operation of God's Spirit physically, but through faith in Christ. Those who believe that it is effected by physical operations, are under a mistake. Many persons under mistaken views upon this subject, neglect religion altogether. And many, after long and laborious efforts to obtain relief by the operations of the Spirit, without finding it, set down in hopeless melancholy. Others gradually get clear of their trouble, and conclude that if religion be a reality, it is not within their power, and that it is useless to attend any longer to it. Others by great effort of mind, and amidst much religious excitement and declamation feel a sudden vibration of mind from pain-

ful anxiety to a state of tranquillity, and seize upon that as evidence of conversion, but which is not associated with any believing view of the character of Jesus Christ, as he is revealed in the gospel as the Saviour. In this case the peace that is felt, does not proceed from faith in Jesus Christ. It is not because they are justified by faith, that they have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is thought to proceed from an inward principle of grace, implanted in the heart by the operation of the Spirit, previous to faith in Jesus Christ. In this, it is essentially different from the conversions recorded in the New Testament. No person can be converted to God *in his sins*, as no person *can love God in his sins*; and all are in their sins who are not justified by faith in Jesus Christ. The Apostles never permitted their hearers to withdraw their attention one moment from the character and offices of Jesus Christ and him crucified, as the object of faith who alone could justify and save them, when they addressed them; and the Spirit, in no instance that we have upon record, ever wrought a miracle, or spake a word, or did one thing in the conversion of a sinner, which was not with a direct view of producing faith and confidence in Jesus Christ. He never diverted the attention of the people *from Christ to himself*, because he was sent not to *speak of*, or to *glorify himself*, but to speak of and to glorify Jesus Christ. The Spirit, as Christ promised to the Apostles in John xvi, 8-10, after he came, convinced the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, that is "he instructed the world on the subject of their sins, their pardon, and their liberation from the power of Satan, which was grounded on Christ's going to the Father — his death, resurrection and glorification." Storrs and Flatt. We see how this was done in every instance, in which the Apos-

tles preached the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and how clearly they exhibited the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ. Peter's two sermons in Acts ii, and ch. x, and Paul's in Acts xiii, 16-41, exhibit in a plain historical detail, the method and order of God in justifying sinners, — as Paul does in his Epistle to the Romans and Galatians. It seems to me that protestant christians in the present age, have greatly obscured, and confused the doctrine of justification, which was held by the Apostles, and the Reformers of the sixteenth century. They seem to labour more for the physical agencies of the Spirit upon their congregations, than they do, that they may understand and believe the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, that they may be justified through faith in him; and there is much more attention paid to the *imagination*s and *passions* of the people, than to their understandings, judgments and affections.

Milner, in his Church History, remarks, that the doctrine of justification in its explicit form, had been lost for many ages of the christian world, previous to the time of Luther, and attributes the great corruptions of christianity to it. He asks "If men had really believed that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, salvation was obtained, and that "God justifies the ungodly through faith without works," how could they have been imposed on, by the traffic of indulgences? The whole system of indulgencies was impious, and the right knowledge of justification was the only remedy adequate to the evil. This was the capital object of the reformation. This is the great mystery revealed by the gospel. The *only ground of hearty and grateful obedience, and real comfort, is the doctrine of justification by faith*. No certain rest can be afforded to the weary mind, and to a state of doubt, but in this doctrine." And no possible ground of

christian union and fellowship can be proposed, when there is such a difference about baptism and other things, but in the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ. In him all true believers meet and are one; they are the children of God by faith in him, however they may differ respecting baptism and other things.

The following account Luther gave of his own exercises and views upon this subject, which delivered him from Roman Catholic superstition, and introduced the great Protestant reformation. It would be well for Roman Catholics and erring Protestants to consider it well.

He observes, "From scholastic divinity I learnt nothing of the real nature of sin, of righteousness, or of the whole christian life, or any thing of the excellency of God or of his works, his grace or his justice. Faith, hope and charity were to me words without meaning. In short I not only learnt nothing right, but I had to unlearn every thing which I had acquired in that way. In the school I lost Christ, I have found him in Saint Paul.

"However blameless a life I might lead as a monk, I experienced a most unquiet conscience. I perceived myself a sinner before God; I saw that I could do nothing to appease him, and I hated the idea of a just God, that punishes sinners. I was well versed in all Saint Paul's writings, and in particular I had a most wonderful desire to understand the Epistle to the Romans. But I was puzzled with the expression in reference to the Gospel "*therein is the righteousness of God revealed.*" My heart rose almost against God with a silent sort of blasphemy. At last in secret, I said with great murmur and indignation, was it not enough that wretched man, already entirely ruined by the curse of original depravity, should be oppressed with every species of misery through the condemning power of the commandment, but even through

the *gospel*, God threatens us with his anger and justice, and thereby adds affliction to affliction! Thus I raged with a troubled conscience. Over and over I turned the above mentioned passage to the Romans, most importunately. My thirst to know the Apostles *meaning* was insatiable. At length while I was meditating day and night on the words, and their connection with what immediately follows, namely, “the just shall live by faith,” it pleased God to have pity upon me, to open mine eyes and to show me that *the righteousness of God*, which is here said in the Gospel to be *revealed* from faith to faith, relates to the method by which God in his mercy justifies a sinner through faith agreeably to what is written “*the just shall live by faith.*” Hence I felt myself a new man, and all the scriptures appeared to have a new face. The righteousness of God now became as sweet to my mind as it had been hateful before, and this very passage of Saint Paul proved to me, to be the entrance into Paradise.” This discovery of Luther, I repeat, was the beginning of the great Protestant reformation from Roman Catholic superstition and ignorance in the sixteenth century. The doctrine, which lies upon the surface of the gospel, that *the justification of sinners and ungodly men, is by faith without works*; and the doctrine that *the just by faith shall live and do good works*, or be justified by works and not by faith only, are the great distinguishing doctrines of the christian religion. Respecting those who departed from the gospel views of justification, it was declared by Paul, that “Christ should profit them nothing—to them the gospel had become of none effect—they had fallen from grace—they were enemies of the cross of Christ.” Gal. iii: iv, 2–4: Phil. iii, 18.

To be more explicit I observe, 1. That *justification* is a law term, and is taken from the business of judicial

courts, and denotes the acquittal of a person tried by such a court upon an accusation of crime. The person accused being put upon trial and found innocent of the charge, is declared by the judge to be *just* in the view of the law; and by an easy and natural figure is said *to be justified* or *made just*. The judgment of acquittal, by which he is said to be justified in this case, does not *make* the person innocent of the crime charged against him; but having been innocent, the judgment of acquittal by which he is said to be justified, *declares* or *manifests* his innocence. This is *meritorious* justification; that is, justification by *personal innocence* or *merit*, and is applicable to innocent or sinless beings alone.

2. This justification is not the justification of a *sinner* and *ungodly man* before God. Hence the *gospel* sense and meaning of the word justification, is very different from the above, because "*all have sinned, and all are guilty before God—all are under sin, and none are righteous, no not one.*" No one therefore of the human family can be justified *meritoriously*, that is on account of his own personal innocence or merit. Hence the justification provided for in the New Covenant for sinners, is, by the *grace* or *favour* of God through faith in Jesus Christ. It was in reference to this that God promised by Jeremiah to make a *New Covenant*, by the rich provisions of which he would forgive the iniquity, and remember the sins of his people no more, which was not done under the Old Covenant except prospectively in reference to the New Covenant, because the Old Covenant had no atonement by which the spiritual or internal sins of the soul could be remitted. Jer. xxxi, 31-33: Heb. viii, 9: x, 4: See the Essay on the new Covenant.

It was of this justification by grace through faith, that Isaiah spoke, "by his knowledge shall my righteous ser-

vant justify, (that is, procure pardon for) many, for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa. liii, 11. Of the same, Zacharias spoke when addressing his infant son John, at his birth, who was the harbinger of Christ, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke i, 76-79. "John the Baptist filled this commission in part when he said "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—"he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John i, 29: iii, 36. "John preached the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts xix, 4.

John's preaching and baptism were only preparatory to the Jewish nation receiving Jesus Christ as the expected Messiah. They who professed a willingness to reform and to believe in Christ when he should come, were baptized by him.

It was in reference to this justification by grace, through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, that he, when he instituted his supper, and gave the cup to his disciples, said "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins."

I will now endeavour to illustrate the principle or doctrine of the justification of a sinner by grace through the redemption there is in Christ Jesus, as contrasted with meritorious justification. The sinner supposed, is a true



penitent believer in Jesus Christ, and is put upon his trial. Charges of various sorts are placed against him—they are true. He has been guilty of many aggravated and heinous sins. How is he to be justified, or how can God be just, and the justifier of this sinner? The gospel answers these questions; “God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life”—“the justification or righteousness of God is by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe—through him is preached the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things”—“they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sin, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”—“to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” John iii, 16: Rom. iii, 22: Acts xiii, 38–39: Rom. xxiv, 26: Acts x, 43.

The truth of the declaration that sinners are justified by faith without works or any act of the body, as was Abraham, who *believed, and his faith was counted or imputed to him for righteousness, is sealed and confirmed* by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were bestowed upon the believing Gentiles the moment that they believed. Acts x, 44–46: xi, 15–18: xv, 7–9: Eph. i, 13.

Therefore, however true and aggravated the charge of sin may have been against the true penitent believer in Jesus Christ previous to his faith, by it he is justified from all things, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. And therefore Paul asks the question in reference to him, “who shall condemn him, since it is God that justifies him through Christ who died for him?” Rom. viii, 33–34.

In this case the formal judgment of acquittal does not *make* the true believer just, or *innocent* of the sins charged against him, but it *declares* him to be so, and to have been *made so by the grace of God through* faith in Jesus Christ at the time he believed with his heart, for with the heart man believeth into righteousness. He was *then* made the righteousness of God in Christ, because in the gospel of the New Covenant, Christ was made unto him *righteousness* or justification, and redemption, and *he received* him and *believed* on his name, and by God's grace he was made the righteousness of God in him. Cor. i, 30: 2 Cor. v, 21: John i, 12-13.

The faith by which the true believer receives Christ is an *internal action of the soul*, and not an *external one of the body*, and is that upon which God suspends the remission of his sin, and by which the believer receives it, and by which God communicates his favour to him as a justified person, and imparts his divine influence into his heart. The *external acts of this faith* are whatever the believer *says* or *does* according to the word of God, whether they relate to submitting to, or obeying the ordinances of the gospel, or to acts of self-denial, or of good works or worship.

Man by nature and practice is involved in guilt, and in the love of sin, which is his disease. God's righteousness revealed in the gospel delivers him from both. The justification then of a sinner is *complex*. It includes the idea of *pardon*, and also of *acquittal*. To pardon sin, and yet to let the disease or the love of sin remain, would be to accomplish but little for the guilty, polluted sinner. God's grace and mercy through the blood of Christ operate in such a way as to *heal* the disease as well as to pardon or remit sin; in such a way as to associate sin with the abhorrence of the heart and duty, or the service of God

with the love of it. Sanctification begins in justification. Sin lost for man communion with God, and destroyed his qualification for the enjoyment of him. Justification restores the former, and sanctification restores the latter. Gospel justification is a *change of state and condition* in the eye of the law, and of the law-giver. Gospel sanctification is a blessed conformity of heart and life, to the law of the gospel, or will of the law-giver. The first is a relative change from being guilty to being righteous. The other is a real change from being filthy to being holy. By the one we are made *near* to God, by the other we are made *like* him. By being justified, of aliens we are made children, and by being sanctified, the enmity of the heart is slain and the sinner is not only made a faithful loyal subject, but a loving dutiful child.

To be justified therefore, is more than to be barely forgiven. To be entitled to and qualified for heaven and brought there, are more than to be saved from hell. A man may be brought in not guilty, at the bar, without being advanced to a throne. A prince may pardon a traitor without conferring on him any further favour. But those whom God justifies, are not only forgiven according to the riches of his grace, but they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and will be finally glorified. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Christ, as our wisdom, and as the Lord our righteousness, has brought in such a way of knowing and of enjoying God, as the first Adam and the covenant of innocence under which he was placed, were utter strangers to. God's justified ones are not only to *live*, but they are to *reign in life* by Jesus Christ.

It is thought by some that there is a contradiction between Paul's account of justification in his Epistle to the

Romans and Galatians, which is "*by faith without works*," and "*by faith that it might be by grace*," and James's account which is "*by works and not by faith only*." When they are both understood, there is no contradiction or inconsistency between them. James ii, 14, in our common version, bears an apparent repugnance to the doctrine delivered by St. Paul. But a slight correction strips it of the difficulty, and exhibits the harmony of the sacred writings; "*What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?*" In this translation the article before faith is wholly omitted; whereas, it is clearly intended to be emphatic: "*can this faith save him?*" Can a faith of which we see and know nothing of its fruits, a faith inoperative and counterfeit, save him? "Can such a faith," says Doddridge in his paraphrase, "as may be separated from good works, save him?" So says Macknight, "Can *this* faith save him?" James does not say that faith will not save him, but denies that a *dead* faith will. In this Paul and he are agreed. This faith, before it works, exists, and believes in Jesus Christ, and by it the sinner is justified, and then he works:—*this* is not that faith that is dead, it *purifies* the heart and *works by love*. Paul speaks of the justification of a *sinner*, and James speaks of the justification of a *saint*. They both speak of a *true* faith. Agreeably to the view that Paul takes of the subject, the charge of sin is brought against a *sinner* by *the law of God*, who is guilty. How is he to be justified before God? Paul answers—By faith in Jesus Christ, without works. He must believe in Jesus Christ for righteousness. He must be justified as Abraham was without works, who believed in God and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Gen. xv. 6: Rom. iv, 3. God promised to Abraham *after* he believed, that in his seed, Jesus Christ, all nations

should be blessed. And Paul declares that they that believe are blessed with faithful Abraham. Their faith is counted to them for righteousness as his was. They become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and are made saints by the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, and are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Gal. iii. 29. The view that James takes of the subject is quite a different one, and relates to a different person. The person that he has in his eye is a *saint* and not a sinner. The charge of *hypocrisy* is brought falsely against him. How is he to be justified against this charge? By good works, or by doing the works of righteousness. To illustrate this, he adduces the case of Abraham *long after* he had been justified by faith without works, as Paul describes it, and *long after* he had been made the father of the faithful. He asks, "was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered up his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God. Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." ch. ii, 21-24. It is true, that *when* Abraham offered up his son upon the altar, he was justified *by works* and not by faith only. But I ask how was he justified *when* he believed in God forty years before, and did nothing else? Moses and Paul tell us that he was justified by faith; he believed, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Gen. xv, 6: Rom. iv, 3. It was on account of his being justified by faith without works, that Abraham had nothing whereof to glory before God; and so it is now. Rom. iv, 2, 4, 5, 11, 16. James did not intend to contradict Moses and Paul. When he speaks of justification by

works, he does not use the term justification in the sense of *forgiveness* of sins, as Paul does, when he says that an ungodly man or a sinner is justified by faith without works. At the last judgment, when men shall be justified by their works, we have no account of any remission of sin there. Justification will be *declarative* and *remunerative*. The righteous will be declared by their works to be righteous, and will receive a crown of life. These works will be the works which faith wrought, and the scripture will be *fulfilled* or rather *illustrated and confirmed* in the same way it was in the case of Abraham and Rahab, by the works of faith which they did after they believed, as is the case of every sincere believer; while *hypocrites who in this life profess faith, but which is alone and dead and produces no fruits of righteousness*, will be *manifest and declared to be hypocrites* by the want of the works of faith, and by their wicked works. And the professedly wicked will be judged and condemned by their works. A hypocrite now is known by his want of the works of faith, or of righteousness, and he may be a hypocrite or a deceived person, although he may have been baptized. It is a matter of great importance to understand the distinction between the account that Paul gave of justification, and that which James gave. Without it, great confusion and error, and great corruptions in the christian religion, must exist. Ignorance and error on this subject were, and are, the causes of the superstition and corruption, that exist among the Roman Catholics. It is owing to the same causes, that among professedly Bible Christians in this age, an opinion prevails that remission of sin is by the physical operations of the Spirit, and which makes *baptism* necessary to the actual justification of a sinner and ungodly man, or to the remission of his sins.

There is *actual* gospel justification, and there is *declarative* gospel justification. Of the former Paul speaks in his account of God justifying a sinner by faith without works, in order to his introduction, into the fellowship and love of God. Of the latter James speaks. The former is the justification of a sinner by faith. The latter is the justification of a saint, or if you please, of James himself, by works and not by faith only. James, who had been justified by faith without works, as Paul had been, and as all sinners are, who are in the divine favour, is now *declared* to be a saint, or is justified as a saint by works and not by faith only — “I will show” said he “my faith by my works.”

I repeat, that agreeably to Paul’s account of the justification of an ungodly man, the charge of sin is brought against him by the law of God. He is guilty, but by the grace or favour of God provided in the gospel of the New Covenant, he may be justified by faith in Jesus Christ, and not by works. This is the righteousness of God. But agreeably to the account James gives, the charge of hypocrisy is brought falsely against a saint, and a true believer, who had been justified by faith without works. He is now justified by good works against the charge in the sight of men, which are *declarative* of his faith as they are the effects of it. The faith by which he had previously been *actually* justified, *manifests* or *proves* itself by the good works which it produces in the view of the world. Hence said James, “I will *show you* my faith *by my works*.” Faith without works is dead, and is indeed no faith, as a man without life is dead, and is no man. But it was not by any works of righteousness in the sight of God, that James or Paul had done, that freed them from the guilt in which the gospel found them. They were justified by faith that it might be by grace, “not of

works lest they should boast." Hence a person before he can be *declaratively* justified before men *by works*, must be *actually* justified *by faith without works* before God. This was the doctrine the Apostles preached, and all who believed, were baptized *into* this doctrine as an *essential gospel doctrine*. They did not perform and submit to the *work* or act of baptism that they *might* be justified as sinners, or to obtain the actual remission of their sins from God, but, *having been justified* by faith, or God *having purified their hearts by faith*, they were baptized *into the doctrine of remission* through faith without works. Acts xv, 7-9. By their baptism they renounced and disowned every other name and system of religion but the name and system of Jesus Christ, which they had previously believed with the heart. They moreover renounced all works and ordinances of every kind, whether Jewish or pagan, or christian, moral or ceremonial, including baptism itself, as having had nothing to do in their *actual* justification before God *as sinners*; and they avouched Jesus Christ as their righteousness, who they received by faith and put on by baptism. Having been crucified with Christ by faith in his cross, they were buried with him by baptism into death.

Luther, in saying that "the just by faith shall live," was violently opposed by the Roman Catholic divines of the stamp of Eckius, who said, "not by faith only," which they added, as they said, to prevent mistakes. Luther objected to their adding to the scriptures, "not by faith only," because he asserted that *a life of faith* is a life of *good works*, and that there are no good works without faith, good works do not *produce* faith, but faith *produces good works*.

Luther says that "the meaning of the Apostle is, not that justified persons *neglect* good works, but that their



justification is *prior* to good works; and that good works can be performed by justified persons only," living and acting by faith.

Every true believer will obey God in all things, as far as he understands God's will—he will be baptized because Jesus Christ the author and finisher of his faith commands him. He will be immersed if he understands the ordinance as consisting in immersion. Possessing the spirit of obedience through faith, his desire is to abound in the works of the Lord. But if he fixes upon any one rite, ordinance or act, as covering the ground of obedience—the spirit of obedience, will be perverted or extinguished to that point.

Abraham, through faith in God's promise to make him a father of many nations in his old age, was, by God constituted the father of all true believers in Jesus Christ, who was the seed of Abraham to whom the promise was made. Gen. xv, 5: Rom. iv, 16–24: Gal. iii, 16.

What was necessary to Abraham's justification and to his constitution as the father of the faithful, is necessary to the justification of sinners now, by which they are, in the divine constitution of things, made the children of Abraham. Children derive their nature from their parents, and not parents from their children. "If Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed in God, and it, his faith, was counted to him for righteousness. Gen. xv. 6. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." Rom. iv, 2–5. Faith was counted to Abraham for righteousness before he was circumcised twenty-four years, and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the

righteousness of the faith, or a seal of his justification by faith, which he had before he was circumcised, that *he might be the father of all them that believe.*

“Justification is therefore of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed — to all that are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all that believe.”

If faith without baptism justified Abraham, and made or qualified him to be the father of all them that believe, so faith without baptism, justifies his spiritual seed; for what was essential to his righteousness or justification and blessing, is essential to the righteousness or justification and blessing of his spiritual seed. If baptism is necessary now to the *actual* justification of *a sinner* in the sight of God, it was necessary to the justification of father Abraham in the sight of God, because their faith and righteousness are the same.

The actings and doings of Abraham under the influence of that faith by which he was justified and made the father of all them that believe, were different from the actings and doings of his spiritual seed under the christian dispensation, because they are by the will of God placed under different circumstances. Sinners are justified by faith as Abraham was, and the just by faith shall live. They all live by faith, but the rule of conduct is different as God's will is different from what it was under the patriarchal state. Abraham's circumcision was not necessary to his justification, because he was justified before he was circumcised, neither is it necessary to the justification of his spiritual seed. It was his duty to be circumcised after he was justified, because God commanded it, but it is not necessary to his spiritual seed after they believe to be circumcised, because God has not commanded it to them. Abraham was justified by faith without baptism, and it

was not his duty to be baptized after he was justified by faith, because God did not command it. Sinners are now justified by faith as Abraham was without baptism, but God *makes* it their duty after they are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, to be baptized *into his name, and to put him on*. He is the promised seed of Abraham, in whom the nations of the earth should be blessed, and in him all true believers are one. "Ye are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs, according to the promise." Gal. iii, 26-29.

Neither the baptism of Abraham's spiritual seed, nor the circumcision of Abraham as their spiritual Father, constitute any part of their justification as sinners before God or of the actual remission of their sins. And therefore, true believers in Jesus Christ, who differ about baptism and other things, are notwithstanding, the children of God by faith in him, and are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

The just by faith shall live. But justification by faith does not make the individuals justified by faith *infallible* and *perfect* in their judgment about baptism or any thing else. Those who practice immersion as baptism, and who regard believers the only proper subjects of it, do not claim to themselves infallibility. And there is as great a diversity of opinion among them, and in some things a much greater one, than there is between orthodox baptists and pedo-baptists. The old protestant baptists and pedo-baptists agree in their views of justification by faith without baptism. The former have copied into their confession of faith the doctrinal principles of the latter out of

their confession, of which that of justification is a most prominent one. See the Presbyterian and Baptist confessions of faith. They esteem the atonement and divinity of Christ essential to the christian religion. While there are others who practice immersion for baptism, and regard believers as the only subjects, who deny the propitiatory sufferings of Jesus Christ and his vicarious death altogether, or that they have any thing to do in that system of grace, according to which sinners are freely justified by faith. They require faith and obedience, that is, baptism, in order to the remission of their sins; but deny that the blood of Christ has any thing to do, in the divine government, in the pardon of sin, and deny that it is revealed in the word of God! *Belief in something and in baptism in order to remission, and obedience by baptism or by immersion*, secures the remission of *their* sins, or justifies them as sinners without the blood of Christ. Remission of sins in their judgment is, by divine appointment, suspended upon faith and the act of immersion, to the exclusion altogether of the sacrificial death and expiatory offering of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. These things show that the practice of *believers*, baptism does not secure its votaries against extravagant errors.

Abraham was constituted the father of the faithful when he believed the promise of God of a numerous offspring in a very advanced old age; and true believers in Jesus Christ, who is Abraham's seed, to whom the promise was made, (Gal. iii, 16,) are made the spiritual children of Abraham. Upon them the blessing of Abraham has come through Jesus Christ, and they receive the promise of the spirit through faith. Gal. iii. 14. Jesus Christ in the Gospel is the only object of justifying faith; he was made a sin offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It is not *every thing*, nor *every sort*

of *being* that is *called Christ*, that is the object of saving faith, for the belief of which people are to be baptized. He has himself guarded us against false prophets and false Christs. Math. xxiv, 24. The Christ in the gospel, into whom true believers are commanded to be baptized, who is the object of saving faith, concerning the flesh, or his human nature, came from the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and who, concerning his divinity, is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. Rom. ix, 5. The object of saving faith, must have power to save. This power Christ obtained, and possesses through his own death; therefore, Christ crucified, who died for the ungodly and sinners, and by whose blood they are justified, is the object of saving faith: he has all power in heaven and in earth, and is exalted a Prince and Saviour to give repentance and remission of sin.

Although Paul has said nothing in respect to the justification of a sinner and ungodly man, by which he is made a saint, but only a true and a living faith, and by which he is for the first time introduced into the divine favour, yet that faith does not shut out its consequences, reformation, hope, love, and the fear of God, and good works, and attention and submission to the ordinances and commandments of the gospel. These are only excluded from the *office* of justifying a *sinner*, and in making him a righteous man. That faith, that does not prompt [to obedience, is worth nothing, notwithstanding the person may have been baptized. Neither does the justification of a sinner by faith without works, shut out the justice of God in requiring good works afterwards to be done. For it is by faith that good works can be performed, as it is by faith in Jesus Christ, that we are made new creatures, and are qualified for doing good works that are pleasing to God. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it

is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." This is justification and is the *foundation* — and we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *good works, for which God hath prepared us* by justification and a change of heart, that we should *walk* in them, — this is *sanctification*, or the *superstructure* of the edifice.

*Faith is the fruitful principle of all good works.* And every true believer is inclined to do good works, and finds his happiness in them, though he does not expect to be saved *for* them. The doctrine of justification by faith without works, is felt by every true believer to give all its spirit and scope to the new obedience of the gospel. Under the sacred and constraining influence of that faith, by which *God purifies the heart*, and which *works by love*, the question is not how much must I do to escape punishment, or to obtain salvation, but "what shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me?" In all ages those who have *practically* received the doctrine of justification by faith without works, have been more distinguished than any others for doing good works, and for denying themselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts. This was pre-eminently the case with Abraham and Paul, and has been with all of Abraham's spiritual seed, down to this day, and is that by which the true spiritual seed of Abraham are distinguished from others.

Some seem to think that God justifies sinners by the physical operations of the Spirit, as Naaman was cured of the leprosy, when he washed in the Jordan, and they rely upon the act of baptism for it. They seem not to know that justification is a gracious *judicial* act of God, and not a *physical one*. The spiritual *moral acts* of God are different from his spiritual *physical ones*. This opinion of justification by the physical agency of the Spirit is subversive of the whole gospel system of religion as far as it

operates. It destroys its moral nature and character, and makes it physical. The difference between God justifying a sinner through faith in Jesus Christ, and the physical agencies of the Spirit, is as great as is the difference between the Governor of this Commonwealth pardoning a felon, or a judge acquitting a criminal at the bar, and a physician curing the cholera or an eruptive fever. Those teachers of the christian religion who entertain this opinion, must of necessity feel but little concern about the true sense and meaning of the word of the gospel as the means of faith, which sinners must understand and truly and cordially believe in order to their justification, and labour for physical agency, and ceremonial rites to effect it. This accounts for a great many peculiarities which have appeared in the religious opinions and practices since the age of the Apostles, as to the design and use of preaching and praying, and of the meaning and effects of baptism, which cannot be found in the Apostolic writings.

It is a most destructive error in theology to confound justification with sanctification. This is the great master error of the Roman Catholics. Its deadly hostility to gospel truth, intelligence and purity, is seen in all that ignorance, superstition, corruption and cruelty, which have marked the whole history of popery.

The following were some of the decrees which were passed by the Roman Catholic Council at Trent, held in the sixteenth century, which were designed to oppose the principles of the Protestant Reformation:

“Whosoever shall affirm that those words of our Lord Jesus Christ, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, (John iii, 5) are to be figuratively interpreted: let him be accursed.

“Whosoever shall affirm that baptism is not necessary to salvation: let him be accursed.

“Whosoever shall affirm that the ungodly is justified by faith only, so that nothing else is to be required to co-operate therewith, in order to obtain justification: let him be accursed.

“Whosoever shall affirm that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy, by which sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake: let him be accursed.”

The following were the sentiments of the Protestants of the sixteenth century, as opposed to the Roman Catholics, on the subject of justification, and are found in all their confessions of faith:—

“God justifies the true believers freely, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by *pardoning* their sins and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not *for any thing wrought in them* or done by them, but for Christ’s sake alone, they *receiving and resting on his righteousness by faith*. *Faith*, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the *alone instrument of justification*; yet it is not *alone* in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.”

None can be justified by works until they are justified by faith without works. The gospel proclamation of peace and good will towards man from God, is based in the atonement—in “*Christ and him crucified*,” as sinners are justified by believing in him. God speaks to man as he sees him, a guilty polluted helpless sinner, and according to his own gracious purpose towards him. He therefore speaks to him by the gospel through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ. Of what advantage would spiritual instruction be to a sinner, which does not bring with it the glad tidings of pardon? What view of the di-



vine character could be manifested to a sinner, that would not terrify or consume him, or that could in any degree lead him to repentance, and reconcile him to God, except the gospel view, which proclaims grace and forgiveness, through the expiatory sufferings and death, and mediation of Jesus Christ, to every true believer? The revelations and communications of God since the fall, have been made to our world according to his purpose and grace, given to us in Christ before the world began.

The Apostles in preaching the gospel under the commission given to them by Jesus Christ, never preached the law to justify and convert sinners. Nor did they seem to expect that the Spirit would convert or regenerate sinners *in their sins* by any operation. They were all in their sins until they believed. They considered that *faith* in Jesus Christ, which was *the truth believed*, concerning him, was itself *the spiritual birth*, and secured the divine favour and all evangelical blessings and privileges, to the sincere enlightened believer, as it was the living principle of union with God, and of a holy, obedient life. They always preached to the people that they might believe, and that believing they might be saved. They preached to them by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. It was the Spirit of God that was *in them*, who spoke in and by them, the things of God, concerning Jesus Christ, in his own words, which gave to the people spiritual discernment, and enabled them to receive them.

The Spirit was not given until Jesus Christ was glorified through his own death. And when the Spirit came he glorified Jesus Christ in all that he said and did, by his inspirations, revelations, and miraculous works bestowed upon and performed by the Apostles, which were all received and performed *in the name* of Jesus Christ. The Spirit *now* speaks to mankind, not by the *living voice* of

the Apostles, but through *their word*, or rather through *his own word*, spoken and *written by them*. It is now found in the written oracles, and possesses the same *living sense* and *meaning* that it did when first revealed, and is intended by the divine constitution of things in the New Covenant, to produce the same spiritual ideas and views, and the same divine faith, that it did produce when spoken by the Apostles; "these things are *written* that ye *might* believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." And it "is the power of God to salvation to them that believe." We are justified freely by the grace of God through the redemption there is in Christ Jesus, whom he hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins,—that he might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. iii, 24–26. Nothing can justify a sinner by being received, that is not by divine appointment a sin-offering. Christ was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. But baptism does not justify the ungodly, because it is not a sin-offering. *Christ and him crucified*, is the object of saving faith; that object is made known by the revelation in the gospel. He shed his blood *for the remission of sin* and *without it there is no remission*. God purifies the heart through faith in his blood.

No person can have right views and feelings on the subject of God's righteousness, in the justification of a sinner, through the blood of Christ, without just and true views of sin and of the purity and holiness of God; nor can he have right views of the gospel. He must realize his own guilt, to believe with the heart unto righteousness. He must view our world ruined by sin. To this source he must trace all the pains and sufferings of mind

and body and death itself. He must view the ruin of fallen angels in hell, and finally impenitent men, in the lake of fire which is the second death, and he must place himself before the judgment seat of Christ as it is developed in the word of God, before he can have suitably affecting, or any thing like competent views of the nature of sin, and before he can appreciate the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, or feelingly apprehend the infinite value and suitableness of God's method of saving sinners, by grace, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every person that has justifying faith, has felt his guilt and helplessness, and perceives the excellence, suitableness and necessity of Jesus Christ as Saviour, to his lost condition as a sinner, and believes in and relies upon him for pardon and salvation. In this case the truly believing and repenting sinner, is taken into the divine favour, without a degrading compromise between the purity and holiness of God, and the guilt and impurity of man. The purity and holiness and justice of the divine character and government, are maintained and gloriously displayed, in the exercise of grace and mercy in the free pardon of sin, through the propitiatory sufferings and death, and expiatory offering of Jesus Christ. And the true believer, who is thus received into the divine favour, feels himself under an everlasting debt of love to divine mercy and grace, and the love of Christ constrains him to obedience. He prefers doing good works, though he is justified by grace through faith without works. Nor would he prefer going to heaven, if it were practicable, in the neglect of duty or good works, or to his being made abundantly fruitful in them. He feels it to be his privilege, duty and happiness to be engaged in doing good works, because it is the will of God that he should do them. The law of God is written upon his heart, through

faith in the gospel, and it is his meat and drink to do his will. He loves God supremely, and longs to love him perfectly. He loves his neighbor greatly, and desires to love him absolutely as himself. He loves the household of faith, because it is composed of the children of God. His affections and fellowship are not limited by sectarian views, and by a party spirit, if he stands fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free, because he is under the law of love, which is the law of Christ.

A tender mother will not decline the most self-denying attention to her darling child, because she is not as a hireling nurse, to receive wages for her labour and trouble: nor would she injure it, even if she could be assured that she would escape all punishment. Love would suffice in both cases. A servant works for hire; and a slave from fear of punishment, each alike from mere self-love, even when they dislike both their master and their work. But a dutiful, affectionate son, will labour for his father, and for the benefit and honour of his family, with alacrity from love, because he accounts their interest and credit and comfort in some respects his own. Nor will he need to be deterred by fear of punishment from doing those things which he knows will displease his kind and honoured father, and injure his respectable, affectionate family.

This is the precise difference between "the spirit of bondage," and "the spirit of adoption;" between those whose hearts have not been purified through faith by the blood of Christ, and those whose hearts have been thus purified. The latter have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear—but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba Father. And thus by possessing filial confidence, reverence, and love, the Spirit himself witnesseth with their spirits, that they are the sons of God.

## ESSAY XI.

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### THE NEW BIRTH.

The meaning of the phrases "Born again—Born of water and of the Spirit—Born of God—and the New Birth."

In the change of the heart from enmity to the love of God—from a carnal mind, to spiritual mindedness, through the faith of the gospel, whether it be produced by the immediate physical operations of the Spirit, or by the moral operations of God by the word of his grace through the atonement of Christ, the change is a real spiritual one—one that forms a most important period in the life of the subject of it, and one of which he is conscious when he compares the present state of his views, desires and feelings under the light of God's word, with what they were before the change took place; *there is that in him which makes him a new creature.*

Much difficulty and obscurity have rested upon the expressions "born again—born of water—born of the Spirit, and born of God," in the New Testament. The following are suggestions which I make for the consideration of others, after having examined the subject as well as I could.

In the conversation of Christ with Nichodemus, when he used the expression "born again—born of water—and born of the Spirit," and the language used by all the Apostles when speaking and writing on the subject of

being *born again*, we must remember that they were all Jews, and when speaking to Jews used words and phrases agreeably to Jewish views and in a Jewish sense.

In the language of the old testament, the Jewish *nation* were said to have been *born* of God and *begotten* of him; to have been *created* and *made* by him. These forms of speech were used to express the high distinction and honor that were conferred upon them, on account of being the natural seed of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob and the twelve patriarchs, and on account of their being incorporated on the Sinai Covenant, as the Commonwealth of Israel and church of God under that covenant and laws, and God's peculiar care over them as a nation, in distinction from the Gentiles. All who were born the natural seed of Abraham, under that covenant, were said to have been born to God.

The following are old testament expressions relative to the religious birth of carnal and typical Israel under the old covenant, who, Christ said, must be *born again*—born of *water* and of the *spirit*, in order to discern and enter into the spiritual reign or kingdom of God based upon the new covenant, which he came to establish by his death: "Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he *thy Father* that hath *bought* thee? hath he not *made* thee?" "Of the Rock that *begat* thee thou art unmindful." Deut. xxxii, 6, 18. "Doubtless thou art *our Father*, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art *our Father*, our *Redeemer*; thy name is from everlasting." Isa. lxiii. 63, 16. "Have we not *all one Father*; hath not God *created* us?" Mal. ii, 10.

As the whole body of the Jews were the children of one Father, even of God, this naturally established among themselves the universal relation of *brethren*, and they

were obliged to consider and deal with each other accordingly. Levit. xxv, 46; Deut. i, 16; ch. iii. 8: xv, 7.

The Israelites being the family of God, he is styled their God and Governor; protector or king; and they his people, subjects or servants. "Ye shall be unto me *a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*" Exod. xix, 6. "Hath God assayed to go and take him *a nation* from the midst of another nation?" Deut. iv, 34. "Hearken unto me, *my people*, and give ear unto me, *my nation.*" Isa. li, 4.

Moses having been appointed by God to be the lawgiver and leader of Israel, they were said to be baptized *into* Moses in the cloud and in the sea, by which they were distinguished from all other people, and were consecrated to God, under the Mosaical dispensation, 1 Cor. x, 3. By this they come under a formal obligation to submit themselves implicitly to the authority of Moses, and to receive his doctrines and laws.

As other nations of the world did not belong unto this city, commonwealth or kingdom, and so were not *God's subjects and people*, in the same peculiar sense that the Jews were, for these reasons they were frequently represented as *strangers* and *foreigners*, and *aliens*, and as being *not a people*. And as they served other gods, and were idolaters, they are termed *enemies*. Exod. xx, 10: Levit. xxv, 47. Deut. xiv, 21: Eph. ii: Col. i, 21.

All the above expressions of high distinction and honor were conferred upon the Jewish nation without reference to any *actual spiritual qualifications* which they possessed, and only on account of their being the natural offspring of Abraham, and of their being incorporated upon the old typical covenant, and placed under the laws and ordinances which belonged to it by the authority of God, "the whole service of which stood only in meats and drinks and diverse warnings and carnal ordinances impos-

ed on them until the time of reformation." Heb. ix, 10. In regard to the time of reformation, the old testament writers abound with predictions of the *new* or *spiritual covenant* and church and kingdom of Christ, *a new creation* under various forms of expression, of which some are the following: Isa. xlii, 1, 4, 6, 8: ch. lxxv, 17: Jerm. xxxi, 31, 74: Comp. with Heb. viii and ch. x, 1, 18: Psal. ii, 1, 2, 6, 7: Danl. vii, 13, 14: Acts xiii, 32, 33. Notwithstanding the high terms of honor and distinction bestowed upon the Jewish nation and people in the old testament by God on account of their being Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, and which never were or could be applied to the Gentiles, when the new covenant and church were established with all the spiritual blessings and privileges which belong to it, embracing Gentiles as well as Jews in its gracious provisions and blessings, the old covenant and the Jewish church, were likened to Hagar and her bond son, who was born after the flesh, in comparison to Sarah and her free born son, who was born after the spirit, Gal. iv, 22, answering to the new covenant and church of Christ. The Jews who had been born after the flesh into the old carnal covenant, which gendered to bondage, and were only the typical children and church of God, these, Christ said, must be born *again*, born into the new covenant, or into the covenant of the spirit. This new birth was not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, as the birth of the Jewish nation had been, but of God by faith in Jesus Christ, the Lord of that covenant. It is called the covenant of the spirit, 2 Cor. iii, 6, for the reasons stated in the Essay on the New Covenant. Christ taught Nicodemus that unless a man be born again, though a Jew, he could not discern the kingdom of God; and unless he were born of water and of the spirit, he could not enter into or enjoy it. John iii. 3, 5. This kingdom of God



is a spiritual kingdom, which Jesus Christ came into the world to establish upon the new covenant.

With a view to the figurative meaning of *water*, as used by Moses and the prophets in the old testament, to describe the gospel and its purifying effects upon believers under the dispensation of the spirit in justifying sinners and in purifying their hearts, I ask ought not Nichodemus as a teacher in Israel, to have understood what Christ meant when he said to him that, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God? Nichodemus ought to have known what Moses and the prophets had said about the new covenant and the reign of Messiah under the gospel. Various forms of expression were used by them to signify the purity and spirituality of the gospel, in its effects in justifying sinners, and sanctifying the human heart, and in destroying idolatry and pollution. In these predictions and representations nothing could be more appropriate than the use of *water* as expressive of the influence of the word of the gospel of God's grace, or the word of the covenant of the spirit, as it is termed by Paul, 2 Cor. iii, 6, in purifying the heart from sin and the world from idolatry.

The following are a few of the predictions and prophecies in the old testament, which Nichodemus ought to have understood: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrines shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: because I will publish the name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth without iniquity; just and right is he." Deut. xxxii, 1-4.

"Thou visitest the earth and waterest it; thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water." Psal. xlv, 9.

“He shall come down like rain upon the new mown grass, and showers that water the earth. In his day shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.” Psal. lxxii, 6, 7.

“In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. And an high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it.” Isa. xxxv, 6-8.

“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy off-spring, and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say I am the Lord’s and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his own hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.” Isa. xlv, 3-5.

“So shall he sprinkle many nations.” Isa. lii, 15. “I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries and bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle *clean water upon you and ye shall be clear from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.* A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put *my spirit within you*, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.” Ezek. xxxvi, 24-27.

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day saith the Lord of hosts, that *I will cut off the name of the idols* out of the land, and they shall be no more re-

membered." Zachariah xiii, 1, 2: Revelations vii, 13-17. The above were figurative representations of the purifying effects of the gospel upon every true believer, which should be published in consequence of the atonement of Jesus Christ. But Nichodemus, from his ignorance of Moses and the Prophets on this subject, thought that Christ meant a natural birth. In this he was mistaken. Christ told him that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Art thou," said he, "a teacher in Israel, and knowest not these things?" which was as much as to say, "Had you understood Moses and the Prophets, you would understand what I have said to you of the necessity of being born again — of being born of water and of the Spirit."

The New Covenant or dispensation of the Spirit, was to be established by Jesus Christ, and was to be the foundation of the new creation, and by it the old Jewish Covenant and church were to be abolished. Jer. xxxi, 31-34: Heb. viii. Nichodemus ought to have understood from the Jewish scriptures, that Messiah was to be made an offering for sin — that he was to die and rise again, and that through his blood by the divine constitution of the gospel covenant, sins were to be remitted, a new heart was to be given, and the Spirit of God was to be imparted to believers, and they made to love God and his laws. Of these things Moses and the prophets wrote and testified. Luke xxiv, 25-27, 45-47. "To him gave *all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*" Acts x, 43. These things Christ plainly told Nichodemus, when he explained to him what he meant when he said that, except a man be born again — born of water and the spirit, he cannot see, or enter into, or enjoy, the kingdom of God, which he

did when he said unto him in the same conversation, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 14, 16. This was Christ's explanation of what he said about being born again—born of water and the spirit. I judge that this is what Christ meant from the fact that he never refused instruction to any sincere inquirer after truth, who applied to him for it, as Nicodemus did, and this is the solution he gave to him of the subject—he said not a word about baptism. If these views be correct, then, to be born again—born of water and of the spirit, in the sense Christ used the expressions, are terms of the same meaning with *a true practical faith in Jesus Christ*, which produces a holy life and true obedience. This secures to the faithful believer all the blessings and privileges, present and future, which are provided by God's mercy and grace in the new covenant, and which will be conferred upon and enjoyed by him in the different periods and stages of his existence through time and in eternity. That true faith in Christ means the same thing with being born of the spirit, I think the gospel abundantly proves. "To as many as *received* him gave he power, or privilege, to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on his name, who *were born* not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but *of God*." John i, 12, 13. "These things are written that ye might *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that *believing* ye might have life through his name." John xx, 30, 31. "Ye are the children of God *by faith* in Christ Jesus—and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii, 26, 29. "Being *born*

again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible *by the word of God, which by the gospel is preached unto you.*" 1 Pet. i, 23, 25. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." 1 John v, 1. "If any man be in Christ, (united to him by faith) he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new; and all things are of God," 2 Cor. v. 17. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath *begotten us again* unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Pet. i, 3-5. "In Christ Jesus I have *begotten you through the gospel.*" 1 Cor. iv, 15. "*Of his own will begat he us through the word of truth,* that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." James i, 18. That practical faith in Jesus Christ and the new birth, as far as a new heart is concerned, are the same things, appears from Paul: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, *but faith that worketh by love,*" or "*a new creature.*" Gal. v, 6: ch. vi, 15.

What are there, in the *state* and in the spiritual blessings and in the qualifications of the true believer in Jesus Christ, which answer to the idea of his being born again—of his being born of the water and of the spirit, and to his being a new creature, and which distinguish him from a Jew under the old covenant? I will enumerate a few of them. The true believer in Jesus Christ is enlightened by the spirit through the gospel of God's grace, and he has repented of his sins; he is justified from all things from which the law could not justify him, and possesses the righteousness of God in the remission of his sins through the

blood of Christ by faith in him; he has the spirit of adoption, by which he calls God his father, as the Gentiles had before they were baptised. Acts x. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus or the gospel, has made him free from the law of sin and death through the atonement of Christ, and he is accounted and treated as righteous in the sight of God—this the law could not do. Rom. viii, 1–4. His enmity against God and his law is removed, and he is reconciled to him through the death of his Son. He holds fellowship with the Father and the Son—worships them in spirit and in truth, and is made a partaker of the divine nature through the precious promises of the gospel; he is an heir and an expectant of glory; and his treasure is in heaven. His life is hid with Christ in God, and he looks for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change his vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. He feels and realizes the fruits of the spirit in his heart and manifests them in his life of love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness and temperance—*he is a new creature.*

These are some of the things which belong to, and are conferred upon, the true believer in Jesus Christ, and are provided for and secured to him, by the grace of God, in the new covenant, or covenant of the spirit, by the death and mediation of Jesus Christ, and which the old covenant could not give. When we contrast these with the works of the flesh or the deeds of the law and the carnal mind, we see plainly the difference between the true believer of the gospel and he that believeth not, whether he be a Jew or a Gentile. The law was a dispensation of *the letter*. But the gospel is a dispensation of *the spirit*, and is full of spiritual blessings. The law killed every sinner whether he was truly penitent or not, by its dreadful

curses. But the atonement of Christ in the gospel by the grace of God has procured repentance and remission of sin, and the gospel gives life to all true penitent believers, without exception, by its gracious promises. The gospel is therefore a *covenant of life* and they that believe in Jesus Christ *have everlasting or eternal life*. John v, 24: ch. iii, 16, 18, 33: ch. vi, 40, 47: ch. viii, 51.

God in the original or first *generation* of man, or in his *primitive creation*, made him in his own image and likeness: man's intellect, as we have seen in the second Essay, was in accordance with the mind of God; he perceived as God perceived; and his affections were in harmony with the affections of God. He loved as God loved, and his will was in unision with God's will. Man's body was not corruptible and mortal. His physical frame and nature in all their parts and powers, as the habitation of his pure spirit "were all very good."

But man sinned and lost the image and likeness of God in his soul, and became corporeally corrupt and mortal. In the new covenant, God has made provision for the *regeneration* of man. Regeneration consists in making man *over again*, and comprehends the *renewal* of his mind into the image of God in which it was made, and in the renewal of his body. This comprehends a *spiritual or DIVINE moral* change of the soul, and a *spiritual or divine physical* change of the body, by the moral and physical agencies of God's spirit. These are provided for, and are and will be accomplished by Jesus Christ in the administration of the new covenant, or the covenant of the spirit. The soul of man is not only renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created it by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, but the body of the true believer, who is one with Christ, will be made a spiritual body, and be like the glorified body of

Jesus Christ. This last will be *spiritual-physical regeneration*, and will be effected by the resurrection from the dead: the former is *spiritual-moral regeneration*, and is effected in this life by the gospel of God's grace. Is not all this comprehended in the scriptural idea of being born of the spirit in its *full meaning*? Was it not necessary that Jesus Christ himself, as the head of all the saints and the Lord of the covenant of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii, should be begotten by the resurrection of his dead body from the grave by the Spirit, before he could establish or enter into his own glorious kingdom, and before he could be placed as king upon the holy hill of Zion? Psal. ii: Luke xxiv, 26, 46, 47: John vii, 39. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 1 Cor. xv, 50.

The covenant of innocency broken, left the body under the power of death forever; but the new covenant provides for and secures to it a resurrection from the dead by Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.

The physical power of the Spirit will regenerate the natural bodies of the saints by their resurrection from the dead and by making them spiritual bodies, as his moral spiritual power, or his *religion-giving power*, by the word of his grace, regenerates their souls. The body will follow the spirit of man and will partake of its nature of purity or impurity. Christ did not come into the world to save men from *natural death*; he was himself obliged to die and to rise again, as I have just said, to be the Lord of the dead and of the living. Rom. xiv, 9. For this cause came he into the world. Under the new covenant, it is appointed unto the righteous to die as well as the wicked—they are also liable to pains and afflictions of body and mind. Christ did not undertake to prevent these. They were permitted



to continue under the new covenant, as the consequences of sin, and to show its dreadful, ruinous nature, and to weaken its power, and by comparison to illustrate the greatness of the salvation of Jesus Christ revealed in the gospel. These afflictions are through grace sanctified to the humble believer, when he is suitably exercised by them.

The conversation of Christ with Nichodemus has been the subject of much speculation. Whatever else may be said of the things therein taught, all *pious* men agree that a spiritual change of heart is taught and is insisted on by Jesus Christ, in order to the enjoyment of God, which is *experienced* by every true christian, however they may differ in their philosophy of it, as to the mode of the divine agency by which it is produced. These things conceded, I would submit the following questions and observations to the impartial reader. Was the expression used by Christ to Nichodemus, "except a man be born *again* he cannot see the kingdom of God," limited to the Jews alone, on account of their having been *once religiously* born under the old covenant, though not *spiritually* born, as we have seen in the quotation from the old testament? To be born *again* implies that they to whom the word applies had been *once* born; was the *first* birth meant by Christ the *natural* birth, which is common to Jews and Gentiles? or was it peculiar to the Jews, who were the natural seed of Abraham, and by having been born under the old carnal covenant or constitution of religion, were said to be born of God, and were "Jews by nature, and sinners of the Gentiles." Gal. ii, 15. The Gentiles never were *once* born to God under any covenant of religion, as the Jews had been, and we do not find in the new testament that the expression "born *again*" is ever applied to them. Those who, among them, were converted to God were said to be the children of God, and were

begotten of God, and were *born of God*, but they are not said to have been born again, as was said of the Jews. If this be true, does it not appear that the birth alluded to, which is the object of comparison with the second birth, was the *religious* carnal birth, which was limited to the Jews on account of their *natural* connection with Abraham and the old covenant under which they were born by nature. Under that covenant they had been "born of the flesh only, and were flesh." Christ came to establish the covenant of the spirit and to erect a spiritual kingdom upon it, which is called the kingdom of God, and it was necessary that the Jewish people, including Nichodemus, a ruler and teacher in Israel, should be born *again* to discern or see the kingdom of God. But how were they to be born again? by *receiving* or *believing* on the *name of Jesus Christ*, for such as did so *were born*, not of blood or the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but *of God* — they are born *again*, not of corruptible seed, as all of Abraham's natural offsprings were, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which by the gospel is preached. John i, 12, 13: 1 Pet. i, 23-25. The Gentiles having been aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, which appertained to the natural descendants of Abraham, though born of the flesh as the Jews had been, were not born to God as they were.

Christ said to Nichodemus as a repetition of the declaration, "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and to impress it more deeply upon his mind, who seemed not to have understood his meaning, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not

that I said unto *thee*, YE must be born again. The wind, or *the Spirit*, bloweth, or *speaketh*, where he listeth or willeth, and thou hearest the sound or *voice* thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." John iii, 5-8. What is the meaning of water here? Is it to be taken *literally*, as meaning the *fluid substance* called *water*? or is it to be taken *figuratively*, as it is used in the Old Testament, to signify the purifying effects of the word of the gospel of the Spirit, by the faith of which "God purifies the heart," or remits sin and sanctifies the soul? What the Spirit does by his word, he does himself. The word of the Spirit is the *instrument* of the spiritual new birth. The word of the covenant of the Spirit is the word of the gospel; it is the testimony that God has given of his Son. They that believe it are born of God: by this word believed they have spiritual discernment and receive the things of the Spirit, or the things which he has revealed concerning Jesus Christ, and the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. ii, 11-14. They, by receiving Christ, receive remission of sin through his blood; no person can be born of God *in his sins*. *He that believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, and he that believes, has remission of his sins, or is justified from all things.* The word of the gospel was well described by the Old Testament writers, under the figure of water, on account of its cleansing and purifying influences, in the justification of those who believe.

The spiritual moral birth, is effected in the heart by the gospel believed — by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The spiritual physical birth which is also provided for in the new covenant, will be effected upon the body, by the exertion of the physical power of the Spirit in

raising the bodies of the saints from the dead spiritual bodies, like the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

The Jewish idea of a religious birth is expressed by Maimonides, a Rabbinical writer, which may enable us to understand the terms in some degree, which are at the head of this Essay, as the Jews would understand them. He observes, "A Gentile who becomes a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and a slave who is set free, are both as it were *new born babes*, which is the reason why those, who before were under the authority of their parents, are no longer so in the eye of our law."

Would not a Jew, soundly converted from the Jewish religion to christianity, as Paul was under the new covenant by faith in Jesus Christ, consider himself to have been *born again*, in comparison to his *religious* natural birth, or his birth according to *the will of the flesh*, under the old carnal Jewish covenant? and would he not consider himself a *new creature* as Paul did?

Some think that *water* in John iii, 5, means *baptismal water*, and that to be born of water and the Spirit, is to be baptized in water. I will not pronounce positively whether it does or does not mean, or comprehend baptism. If it does, it is only an emblematical birth as far as *baptism* is concerned, and expresses the spiritual moral change that had previously passed in the soul, by the faith of the gospel. Tertullian, in the second century, who was the first of the fathers to write on the subject of baptism, maintained the opinion that Christ meant baptism in the passage, and that no person could be saved without it. This opinion and the various constructions given to the text, have been the cause of more error, corruption and persecution, since the second century, than any other one thing in the christian religion.

Calvin, Gill and others, have denied that water in John

iii, 5, means baptismal water at all. Calvin says, "They are deceived who suppose that this passage refers to baptism, because it mentions water. For after Christ had declared to Nicodemus the corruption of nature, and shewn him the necessity of being born again, because Nicodemus was dreaming of a second corporeal birth, he here indicates the manner in which God regenerates us, namely, by water and by the Spirit, as if he had said by the Spirit, who, in the ablution and purification of the souls of the faithful, performs the office of water. So *to be born of water and of the Spirit*, is no other than to receive that influence of the Spirit, which does in the soul what water does on the body." God remits sin by faith in the word of the gospel, and not by the operation of the Spirit—"he purified their hearts by faith." Acts xv, 9. I repeat that it is a great error in theology to confound justification with sanctification. All *protestant* confessions of faith are very particular in distinguishing between them. The justification of a sinner is of necessity prior to his sanctification. The first is effected at once through faith, the other is progressive through life:—it is a great error to say that a sinner is justified by the operation of the Spirit, except it may be thought to be concerned in producing faith.

Dr. Gill says, that "by water in John iii, 5, is not meant material water, or baptismal water; for water baptism is never expressed by water only, without some additional word, which shows that the ordinance of water baptism is intended; nor has baptism any regenerating influence in it; a person may be baptized, as Simon Magus was, and yet not be born again."

In accordance with the quotations formerly made from the Old Testament, of the figurative use of water, in describing the spiritual blessings to be enjoyed under the

gospel, we find that Christ employs water to represent the remission of sin, and the sanctification of the soul, by the word of the gospel of the Spirit, and all spiritual blessings, in his teachings: "He that *believeth* on me *as the scripture hath said*, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake he of the Spirit, which they that *believe* on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii, 38, 39. "If thou knewest the gift of God, who it is that saith to thee give me to drink, thou wouldst have *asked* of him and he would have given thee living water. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water spinging up into everlasting life." John iv, 10-14. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely;—And he shewed me a pure river of water of life. — Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him *take* of the water of life freely." Rev. xxi, 6: xxii, 1, 17. Compare these New Testament expressions with the Old Testament quotations formerly made, as figurative representations of the spiritual blessings of the new covenant, and which are communicated to every true believer in Jesus Christ, and it appears to me that the expression of Christ in John iii, 5, will be intelligible without necessarily including the ordinance of baptism.

Water baptism in the New Testament, is not, as far as I can see, ever called a birth. The Jewish fathers, in the Old Testament, were said to have been baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, but they are not said to have been born by their baptism. 1 Cor. x, 2. "We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is is neither Jew nor Greek, &c.

Gal. iii, 26. By their baptism the Galatians were not said to be born of water, but only to have put on Christ, through the operation of that faith, by which God purified their hearts, and made them his children, agreeably to the new covenant and the promise made to Abraham. Gen. xv, 5, 6. Both Jews and Gentiles were made the children of Abraham by faith in Jesus Christ, as Abraham was made, or constituted, their spiritual father by God, through faith in God's promise to bless the nations of the earth, through his seed, Christ. Gal. iii, 7-9, 16; Gen. xii, 3, 7: ch. xv, 5, 6: ch. xvii, 7. By baptism they all renounced their Jewish and Gentile peculiarities, and assumed Christ and his gospel, as the only Saviour and system of laws. The Gentiles received the promise of the Spirit through faith, and after they believed they were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, before they were baptized with water. Acts x, 43-47: ch. xi, 15, 18: Acts xv, 7-9: Eph. i, 13.

From the previous quotations, it does not appear that in the New Testament baptism is always meant when water is mentioned, but only when it is so expressed. I do not intend to disparage baptism in any degree, but I do believe that wrong views of it have been the occasion of more practical error and corruption, in the christian religion, than any other one thing in it. Instead of its bringing all true believers into one fellowship in Christ, in peace and love, as expectants of a glorious resurrection and a blessed immortality, by his grace and power, as it was designed, it has been desecrated and made the occasion of great corruptions, divisions and persecutions.

Nicodemus was censured by Christ for not understanding what he said, when he declared to him that a man must be born again, born of water and of the Spirit,

before he can see, or enter into the kingdom of God. He was *censured, as a teacher in Israel*, for not knowing these things, of which he had been speaking, that is, for not understanding what Moses and the Prophets had said concerning Messiah and his kingdom, of which Christ had told him: "Art thou a teacher in Israel and knowest not these things?" But Nicodemus could not find baptism, which is a gospel ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ himself, in the Old Testament. At the time of the conversation with Nicodemus, he had not instituted it. Christ could not have meant the baptism of John the Baptist. His baptism did not introduce any body into the kingdom. The kingdom was not set up — the atonement was not made, nor was the new covenant established, nor the King crowned, until after Christ died. Christ did not mean proselyte baptism among the Jews, for there was none for more than a hundred years after the establishment of the christian religion practised among them in introducing proselyted Gentiles into their fellowship; and this was probably borrowed from the christian institution. This is made clear by Drs. Owen, Gill and others. If we consider water in the Old Testament, used figuratively, to represent the purifying influences of the gospel in the New, in the remission of sins, or the justification of sinners by faith and the purification of the heart, and the destruction of idolatry in the world, the obscurity or difficulty of John iii, 5, is, I think, obviated. I repeat that Christ explained to Nicodemus his meaning, as far as it had a personal and individual application, when he told him after reproving him for his ignorance, that, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that



*whosoever believeth* in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John iii, 14-16. Surely those who possess everlasting life, must be born again; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." —— "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me, hath everlasting life." —— "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." John v, 24: ch. vi, 47: 1 John v, 1.

## ESSAY XII.

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### THE RELIGION-GIVING OPERATION.

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God, in giving religion, creates no new faculties or powers in the mind — His religion-giving operation is by his word intelligibly presented to the mind, perceived, understood and believed.

Payne, in his book entitled “Elements of Mental and Moral Science,” which has been very highly recommended by a number of the most distinguished orthodox theological professors and teachers in these United States, observes, that “The mind is a simple, indivisible essence. It does not, like the body, consist of parts. The powers of perceiving, and feeling, and judging, are not to be considered as separate portions, or members, so to speak, of mind, but as capabilities imparted by its Creator, of existing in various states of thought, and feeling, which constitute the whole phenomena of mind. These phenomena are the mind itself in different states. A thought existing in the mind, is the mind thinking; an idea is the mind conceiving. Our notions, thoughts and ideas, are nothing more than the mind itself in different states. The same is true with our endlessly diversified sensations. They are not distinct and separate from the mind. There is not the mind *and* its sensations, as we say there is the body and its limbs, for the sensation is the mind affected in a particular state.

“The mind is an unknown substance of which the qualities only can be ascertained. The faculties of the

mind, or its powers and susceptibilities, are not to be distinguished from the mind itself. The powers and susceptibilities of the mind denote the constitution it has received from its Creator, by which it is capable of existing in all the different states which form the consciousness of life.

*“Our feelings depend upon the nature of mind, and the nature of the objects by which the mind is affected.* It is the object that affects the mind when sentient; but it is the original susceptibility of the mind itself, which determines and modifies the particular affection.

“Though the fall of man effected no change in the original susceptibilities of the mind, though it created none, and extinguished none, it perverted all.”

Religious states of mind, if produced by the perception and belief of the truth, are produced by the manifestations God makes of himself. Different manifestations of his character perceived, produce different feelings. Hence the religious feelings under the different dispensations were different, as the character of God was differently manifested. The perfection of religious feeling is realized under the display of the perfections of God in the gospel, in the states of mind of the enlightened, humble christian.

I defined religion to be a system of truth, of which God is the great subject; or, a system of affections and conduct, of which God is the supreme object. This system was revealed by God himself. And, since immediate, supernatural revelations ceased, by which it was originally made known, mankind have been limited by the constitution of their minds, and the relations they bear to spiritual things, to the record and the oral traditions of these revelations, for religious or spiritual knowledge.

God has never employed miraculous power to produce

effects, that could be produced by the operation of second causes. The word of God, in its original revelation, was miraculous and supernatural, and imparted spiritual and divine states of mind, consisting in spiritual ideas, thoughts and feelings, which could not be produced without it. This word is now established by God, in the order of second causes in the spiritual economy, for the production of religious or spiritual effects in the human mind. It retains the nature and qualities of its original, supernatural, divine character, and affects the mind, when sentient or percipient with a sense of divine things, corresponding with its sense and meaning when truly apprehended: — it is the instrument of ideas and thought, of knowledge and feeling.

The miraculous and supernatural origin of religion in the world, by the revelations of God, are proven by the fact that there is no nation upon the earth that has any notion of religion, which does not refer it to a supernatural origin, and to some remote period when its god or gods revealed it to mankind. All nations, besides the Jews, Christians and Mahometans, have been unable to give any other account of their religion, further than that they received it from tradition, and they give some fabulous miraculous account of its origin.

The existence and character of God, can only be known by his *personal manifestations*, or by his *historical actions and doings*. These must be miraculous and supernatural to bring them within the reach of the perceptions of the mind, and to associate the invisible God with the sensible universe in the view of the mind. These are effected by the manifestations of Jehovah in the old and new testaments.

Two things, then, are necessary to the existence of religion, as I have above defined it, in the human mind. The first is a capacity for it. This is an original or na-

tive power, and which, as Payne remarks, was not extinguished by the fall, and consists in the intelligent nature of the mind. The second is a *revelation* of divine truth, as mankind have it not naturally. The revelation must be made in intelligible words and sentences. Since the immediate miraculous revelations ceased, all that can be alleged of the immediate operations of God's Spirit, in the production of religion in man, relates to the powers and susceptibilities of his mind, which render him capable of religion; these are greater at some times than at others, but no measure or degree of these can enable the mind to acquire religious or spiritual knowledge, without revelation, more than a well organized eye can enable a man to see without light.

Every person whose organization is natural and healthy, and whose mind is not deranged, has, in the constitution of his moral nature which God has given him, and which he sustains, a capacity for religion, under the light and influence of revelation. The history of the world, from the creation of man to the present period, and the entire ground exhibited in the scriptures, of man's responsibility to God under the covenant of innocence in Eden, and under the Patriarchal and Mosaical dispensations, and under the gospel, and the whole process of man's probation and of the future judgment, are based upon, and prove the existence and influence of, this capacity. And all show that the actual improvement of it into religion, or into spiritual knowledge and affection, is limited, by divine appointment, to the use and influence of the revealed word of God, which makes known his existence and moral character. I will illustrate and prove these things by a direct appeal to some scripture examples and authority, in the old and in the new testament, which indicate the nature and character of the whole.

These references are made as examples of the whole, and to engage the attention of the reader to examine the subject, by carefully reading the scriptures for himself. I begin with the first communication that was made by God to our first parents after the fall: These will exhibit the moral character and governmental authority of God, as well as his manner of manifesting his will and of making himself known to mankind. They will also show that *the religion-giving operation of God is by his word.* “And they (Adam and Eve) *heard the voice of the Lord God* walking in the garden. *And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God.*

“*And the Lord God called unto Adam and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said I heard thy voice and was afraid.* Gen. iii, 8-&c. Read this chapter to the end and observe the *speech* used by God, which Adam and Eve *understood*, and the *religious instruction* he gave to them, and the *understanding and moral feeling* they *evinced* under what he said to them.

God addressed Cain in the same way in words after he killed Abel, “*And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is thy brother? What hast thou done?* The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hands. Gen. iv, 9 11. Read this chapter also for the same purpose, and particularly to see evinced the *moral and religious feeling* manifested by Cain, under the weight of guilt, under the display of God’s personal authority and justice.

“*And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, &c. And behold I, even I, do bring a flood of*

*waters upon the earth.*" And the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. vi, 13, 14, 17: ch. vii, 1. Paul says that "*by faith* Noah, *being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark.*" Heb. xi, 7. Notice in this, the *personal-moral*, purity and righteousness of God, and the display of his physical power.

The following quotations show, that the religion-giving operations of *the Spirit of God* were by words, "And the Lord came down in a cloud and *spake* unto Moses, and he took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the Seventy Elders. "And when the Spirit rested upon them they *prophesied*, and did not cease." Numbers, chap. xi, vers. 25, 26, 29. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Balaam, and he took up a *parable* and said, How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! Numb. xxiv, 2, 3. "And the Spirit of God came upon Saul and he *prophesied among the prophets.*" 1 Saml. x, 19, 20. "The Spirit of the Lord *spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.* The God of Israel *said*, the rock of Israel *spake to me, He that ruleth over men* must be just, ruling in the fear of God." 2 Sam. xxiii, 2, 3. "Thou *testifiest* against them by thy Spirit in the prophets." Neh. ix, 30. "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me." Isa. xlvi, 16. "The Spirit entered into me when he *spake unto me.* Ezek. ii, 2. The Spirit took me up and *I heard a voice saying*, Blessed be the glory of the Lord. Ezek. iii, 12, 24. "The Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and *said unto me*, Speak: *Thus saith the Lord*: "Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them." Ezek. xi, 5. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters *shall prophesy.*" Joel ii, 28. "I am full

of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment and of might, *to declare unto Jacob his sins.*" Mic. iii. 8. "*The words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets.*" Zech. vii, 12.

The personal character and office of Jesus Christ, the *incarnate Word*, who is the author and finisher of our faith, are described by Moses and the prophets as *a speaker and preacher*: "And the Lord said I will raise them up *a prophet* from among their brethren—and I will put *my words into his mouth and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him—and whosoever shall not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.*" Deut. xviii, 15–18. Comp. with Acts iii, 22, 23. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me *to preach good tidings unto the meek—to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*" Isa. lxi, 1. Comp. with Luke iv, 18–20.

Sin and rebellion always consisted either in the *unbelief, corruption or rejection and transgression* of God's word, after it had been *spoken and published* to the people, by his authority properly attested,—and the law of God was always published by *words and sentences*.

Of the physical operations of the spirit which *do not* give religion, and which are common to all mankind, and which sustain their natural and moral existence and powers, which render them capable of religion under the light and influence of the *revelation of the Spirit*, the Scriptures speak in the following manner: "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. 'The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.'" Job xxxvi, 13: ch. xxxiii, 4. "If he set his heart upon me, if he gather unto himself his Spirit and *his breath*, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to dust." Job xxxiv,



14, 15. The immediate physical operations of the Spirit sustain our natural lives, and all our spiritual, intellectual and moral powers and susceptibilities, which render us capable of religion; but religion itself is imparted by the *word* of God, which *enlightens* and *impresses* these spiritual powers and susceptibilities. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, thou renewest the face of the earth." Psal. civ, 30. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me." Psal. cxxxix, 7-10. "God giveth to all life and breath and all things, and hath made of one blood all the nations of men—for in him we live and move and have our being." Acts xvii, 24-26, 28.

The powers of the mind, which render man capable of religion, and which were "perverted by sin," are, when sentient, acted upon by the word of God's grace and truth in the gospel through the ears or eyes, which it perceives; and in turn the mind attends to and acts upon the word, and investigates its sense and meaning, which are not manifold but one. By these means the mind perceives or discerns spiritual things through and by the word, believes in and receives them.

By these means the natural mind is made spiritual—it discerns spiritual things through the words of the Spirit, and receives them. But the natural man receives them not, because he does not discern them; he judges of things by his senses, and passions, and reason exercised upon *natural appearances* and upon *natural things alone*. Every thing that is *supernatural*, or that does not fall within the bounding circle of *nature* and *natural phenomena*,

he rejects as foolishness. Every thing of divine revelation is of that character in his view, because every thing is supernatural, and therefore, as long as he is limited by nature in his perceptions and investigations, he never can discern or receive spiritual things—he will continue a natural or an *animal man*. The power of God which sustains the mind in its intellectual and moral faculties and susceptibilities when attending to and investigating the word, is altogether different from the operations of the Spirit by which the word was made known or revealed, which is the subject of its investigation, and which enlightens it. That word, when understood and *truly* believed, rectifies “the perverted susceptibilities.” Sin that perverted them is pardoned through faith in the blood of the atonement, and the soul is restored to the knowledge and love and fellowship of God, by his mercy and grace received by the faith of the gospel.

I will illustrate my meaning: The Flat-headed Indians are a tribe who live beyond the Rocky Mountains, about three thousand miles distant from St. Louis. A trader from Canada visited that tribe two years and a half ago, and saw them engaged in idolatrous worship. He told them that there exists *a true God* who is altogether different from the one that they worshipped, which was an idol, and had no definite existence or character; and that *the true God had given to the people of these United States, a BOOK, in which he had made known his own character and worship*, which would teach them all that was necessary for them to know concerning him and themselves, and how they might worship him acceptably, and possess his favour, and be happy in him. This information operated upon their *sentient minds*, and induced them to call a council of the whole tribe to consult on the subject, and upon full consideration, determined them to send several

of their Chiefs on a journey of three thousand miles to Gen. Clark at St. Louis, with whose character they were acquainted, to obtain information relative to the book and the God that it revealed. They undertook the journey, and two of the number died on their way. The survivors arrived, and after being informed by Gen. Clark that there is such a book, and such a God, and such a worship as had been described to them, and having learnt something about them, they resumed their journey of three thousand miles back again, to bear the pleasing intelligence to their tribe. As far as these Chiefs understood the christian religion, by the instruction they received from the trader and Gen. Clark, they believed it.

These people had native religious susceptibilities, although, like the Ephesians, they were dead in trespasses and sins. Their susceptibilities were acted upon, and they were enlightened in some small degree, by the information of the Canadian trader. And the minds of these Indians acted upon the intelligence they received.

Their whole nation or tribe, *lived, moved and had their being in God*, through the ages and generations that were passed. God, in their constitution, had given to them powers of intellect and feeling, which rendered them capable of religion, and which *He* sustained, but of *his support* they were naturally ignorant; and their messengers travelled six thousand miles on foot, to obtain information on the subject. There is but one Jehovah, one only living and true God. He giveth to all, life and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all the nations of men. In his wisdom, the world by wisdom, since man fell, has not known him. His existence and character, have been made known, by the personal manifestations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who exist in the one Jehovah. These manifestations were made by divine super-

natural revelations, in words and sentences, and in miraculous works. These have been recorded in the book of God, and since the miraculous powers have ceased or have been withdrawn, which was not long after the record was finished, this record of God's word has been the established means, by the appointment of God, for enlightening the human mind in religion, in the knowledge of God, and of divine and eternal things. Do not matters of fact prove these things to be true? Why were the Flat Head Indians obliged to travel six thousand miles to obtain this information from the Word of God itself, imparted to them by General Clark and friends, if God gives to the mind this information without his word? The same question might be asked in reference to the whole world, since the Apostles were commissioned to go and preach the word, and its effects in turning men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to serve the living God. It might also be asked, could not God have given these Flat Head Indians religion without this long journey, to learn from the word his existence, and gospel character and plan of salvation, and acceptable worship? And could not God have given the Athenians and Ephesians, and other idolaters and Atheists, religion without sending Paul and the other Apostles to them with his word? And cannot the present heathen nations be converted without gospel missionaries, by the immediate revelations and power of God? and cannot children be taught religion by the Spirit without religious instruction and training by the Scriptures? It would be just as reasonable to ask further, cannot God support men without air and food? cannot God enable a person to see without light, for he made all these things and sustains them? God has a right to limit himself to the ways and means of his own appointment and choice, in the accomplishment of religious purposes and ends, as well as in na-

ture. This he has done, and requires of us to know it and to acquiesce in it, and to go along with him in the use of the means which he has ordained in both cases. It was *God's word* that Paul and Apollos planted and watered. They planted and watered this word in the soil of the human mind that God had made, and which he rendered susceptible of growing the seed and producing the increase: and thus *the whole* was from God: *the seed—the power of the sower and waterer, and their commission to sow and water, and their qualifications to do so, and the fertility of the soil, are all of God, and there is nothing properly human or natural*—nothing that is properly Paul's or Apollos's in the case—Paul and Apollos were only *ministers of the word*, by whom the Corinthians believed, and nothing more—God gave the increase and claims the glory to himself. This is true in the present day. The word of God revealed to Paul and to the other Apostles, and to the Evangelists is recorded, and by divine appointment we are limited to it in preaching and teaching and learning the things of God in the gospel. But we are apt to *destroy the good seed of the word, or the soil in which we are commanded to sow it, by erroneous views of that word, and by a false philosophy concerning it and the soil.*

These things unfit men for sowing the good seed. They often destroy the vitality of the word, which is spirit and life, and extinguish the fertility of the soil, before they sow; and they often sow their wretched speculations, which are no better than darnel or pebbles, instead of the good seed of the word of the gospel. They are more concerned to *make the people believe* that the gospel of God's grace is a *sealed book* and a *dead letter*, and that *they cannot believe it*, than they are so to present it as to occasion them to believe it: and this they call *orthodoxy* or *the true faith*.

The pious zeal of the Methodist denomination of Christians in New York, has induced them to set on foot a mission to bear the word of the gospel of God's grace to the Flat Head Indians. The missionaries will not carry the *natural presence* and *physical operation of God* to them, or spiritual susceptibilities and power. These they possess, and they have been under the influence of them since they had a *natural* existence: but they will carry to them the *religion-giving system of truth—the word of God's grace*, by which *He* gives religion, and which was fully revealed and perfected more than seventeen hundred years ago, by the revelations of the Spirit of God. To this system nothing is to be added, and from it nothing is to be taken. In giving them religion, God *limits himself* to his own word and to a known language; therefore the gospel must be either translated into the language of the Flat Head Indians, or they must learn the English language in which it is written, in order that he shall give it, and they shall receive it. These observations to many may appear to be very strange, gratuitous and arbitrary. To such I would ask, Of what use to an English congregation would the reading of the Scriptures in Greek or Hebrew or Latin be? Of what advantage would preaching the gospel in a foreign language be to such a congregation? Paul says, that such reading and preaching would be of no use whatever—that the reader and preacher and congregation would be barbarians to each other, not because God *cannot* enable their hearers to understand, but because he *will* not; and he *will not* because it is not according to his *own chosen wise method or plan for doing it*. The hearers have powers and susceptibilities which render them capable of religion, but they are not acted upon, and cannot be by God's word, when presented in an unknown language. 1 Cor. xiv, 23-25: Rom. x, 17.

I formerly observed, that *the original ideas* which are revealed by the word of God, and which are essential to the existence of religion, and particularly to the Christian religion, are but few; but these, if taken away, with all their spiritual associations, extinguish every idea or notion of spiritual existence. These are, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost—Creation—Man's fall—his immortality, spiritual existence—redemption through the blood of Christ—the resurrection of the body—a future judgment—heaven and hell—new heavens and a new earth. These ideas were revealed by words, and are perpetuated by the same. Some of these ideas the nations of the earth have, through traditions derived from early revelations, which are, however, very much corrupted.

If the missionaries, who go to the Flat Head Indians, sow the good seed that Paul sowed, and water as Apollos watered, they will make just such Christians as Paul and Apollos made; or if they alter in these respects the *Apostolic means and order of things*, they will produce a different increase from what Paul and Apollos produced. But it will not do to ascribe it to God in the degree in which it differs from the religion of Apostolical Christians. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." *The seed must be God's seed*—it must be the *incorruptible seed of the word*, apprehended and believed in its own divine sense and meaning, and appropriated to the purposes of thought, faith, hope, love and conduct, for which it was designed, in order to produce the fruits of righteousness. It is in this way that it grows. It must be taught them in a *known language*, for God will not give them religion—he will not save them by *grace through faith*, which is the gift of God, but through his own word, which is easy to be understood, when properly presented, and which they must believe; because faith comes by the word of God. This

was verified on the day of Pentecost, when the prophecies in the old testament, and the promises of Christ in the new, were fulfilled in a literal and perfect manner by the out-pouring of the spirit. When the Galilean disciples, upon whom the spirit was poured out, *spoke in foreign tongues*, the men of Judea did not understand what they said; and while the strangers, the devout Jews from every nation under heaven—heard them speaking in *their own* languages in which they were born, the wonderful works of God in reference to Jesus Christ and the gospel, with amazement and wonder, the *men of Judea* mocked and said, that they were drunk with new wine: their speech was without meaning or sense. To these very men, who thus mocked, Peter, by the Holy Ghost, and the rest of the Apostles, spoke:—Peter addressed their sentient minds intelligibly, and said, “Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, *be this known unto you, and hearken to my words*: for these are not drunken as *ye suppose*. But *this* is that which was spoken by Joel the prophet,” &c. These mockers, at the end of the discourse, on account of what they *saw* and *heard* and *understood*, were pricked in the heart, believed in Jesus Christ, changed their minds, and renounced Moses and the law for remission of sin, and received Jesus Christ for salvation, and were baptised into the *remission of sins* for *his* sake, or into his salvation. Faith was given to them and salvation with it, by God, by their hearing, understanding and believing the word. The Apostle Paul also testifies most clearly that the religion-giving operation of God is by his word, uttered in a known language and understood. He says, “I thank God I speak with tongues more than you all, yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that is, *intelligibly*, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an un-



known tongue. If, therefore, the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are *unlearned* and *unbelievers*, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, or teach intelligibly, and there come in one that believeth not, or one that is unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: (by the Spirit speaking in them intelligibly) and thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth." 1 Cor. xiv, 18, 19, 23-25. By these means their religious and spiritual powers and susceptibilities are impressed and improved into religion—*God does it all*. On the day of Pentecost the religious or spiritual susceptibilities of the three thousand were *improved* into Christian *capabilities* by the gospel of God's grace spoken by the Holy Ghost, who was in the speakers. The agency God employed in converting them was a *real and proper agency*—but it was a *religion-giving agency, exercised upon the minds of the people in a way suited to their intellectual and moral nature*; and the means employed were spiritual means, consisting in the very words and sentences which were revealed by the Spirit of God, and in the miraculous works which they saw. It was by their *sense and meaning*, understood and believed, that these people were converted. God gave to them *a new heart*, comprehending *a new taste and disposition to relish divine things*, and to love and serve him. These, however, were given to them through the atonement of Jesus Christ, and by the grace of God by the gospel. They had no power in themselves naturally to *enlighten* their own minds or to *change* their own hearts, or to *give* themselves new hearts. Salvation is of God—God had mercy upon them, and sent to them deliverance *by the gospel*, "*which proclaims liberty to the captive, and is the power of God unto salvation to every*

*one that believeth.*" The religion-giving operation of God was different from the agency that he employed in raising the dead body of Lazarus, and in curing the palsy; and it was different from that employed in sustaining Moses forty days without food.

"As our feelings," in the language of Payne's Philosophy, "depend upon the *nature of the objects* by which the mind is affected," so the religious affections must be produced by the *perceived sense and meaning* of the spiritual or divine objects which impress the mind through revelation. God's justice and mercy, and his grace and truth manifested by the gospel, bring the soul with all its powers and susceptibilities under divine gospel influence. The Holy Ghost was promised by Christ to convince the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment, or as Storr and Platt render it, as formerly quoted: "He will instruct the world on the subject of their sins, their pardon, and their liberation from the power of Satan, which was grounded on Christ's going to the Father, his death, resurrection and glorification." John xvi, 8-10. The Holy Ghost convinced the pentecostal Jews of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment, and converted them to Jesus Christ. He did not speak of himself, but he took the things of Christ and showed them to the Apostles, and *through and by them* to the people, as he did on all other occasions, in which sinners were converted by them. If we examine carefully what the Spirit said by Peter in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, which convinced and converted three thousand souls, we shall see a great difference between the agencies of the Spirit on that occasion, by which Jewish sinners were converted, and the agencies which are *supposed* to be employed in the conversion of sinners in modern times. We have now the *record* of what was then exhibited *miraculously*, but the record is not relied on.

The powers and susceptibilities of the mind, which render men capable of religion, and which enable them to attend to, understand, believe and feel its truth and importance, are, by *the divine constitution of things*, IMPROVABLE under gospel light and influence. They are the same now that they were in the days of the Apostles. This is manifested in the effects of the judicious and well directed efforts of pious parents in the religious instruction of their children; and in missionary labors among the heathen nations, and also in the effects of protracted meetings for public worship. If these meetings were conducted more with a view to enlighten the understanding by the knowledge of gospel truth, to convince the judgment, and to engage the confidence and affections in practical religion, I have no doubt but that the effects would be much greater and more permanent than they are. In these cases I repeat, that all that can be alleged of effects which God produces in *an immediate way*, consist, not in making new revelations or making new faculties, but in *aptitude and susceptibility of mind to attend to, perceive, believe and feel the truth, and to receive to itself the doctrines of the holy volume*. And yet these effects are not the religion-giving operation of God without the word, because that is limited to the word of God itself, which operates upon them and the mind upon the word, as in the absence of the word nothing of a spiritual nature can be attended to, discerned or believed, however acute the powers and susceptibilities of the mind may be.

## ESSAY XIII.

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### THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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The out-pouring of the Spirit—The baptism of the Holy Ghost—Gifts of the Spirit—Seal and confirmation of the Spirit—The Apostolic office.

There are many forms of expression used in the New Testament, which were applicable to the state of things, and to events in the days of the Apostles, and which were descriptive of spiritual operations, gifts and personal endowments of christians then, which cannot, in the *same sense*, be applied to the state of things, and events, and to christians now. This is owing to the actual difference that existed between the spiritual gifts and revelations, by which the christian religion was made known, and confirmed, in the Apostolic age, and the present. Then, they were miraculous and supernatural, consisting in *signs* and *wonders*, and in immediate revelations in words. Now, they are made known by the written word of these things, read or heard, and understood.

Unless this difference be understood and kept in mind, the facts themselves, and the forms of expression used to designate them in the word, and which are the means of our religion, will be misunderstood, and we shall be liable to great error, as to God's way of imparting religion. The origin, use and actual authority of the written word of God, and the Apostolic qualifications for writing it, will be overlooked, and its use in the establishment of the re-

ligion and Chnrch of Jesus Christ, and their perpetuation will be misapprehended.

A failure to make the distinction between the supernatural gifts and operations of the Spirit, and their design and use in the Apostolic age, which were essential to the commencement and establishment of the gospel, from the present state produced by the word of the Apostles, and the institutions of the gospel, is the cause of the most extravagant errors that exist. It lies at the foundation of all the wild fanaticism that has appeared in the springing up of new opinions and sects in the christian religion, and in the propagation of them. They regard the inspirations and revelations of the Apostolic age, models or examples of their inspirations and revelations, not knowing that what the Evangelists and the Apostles wrote by inspiration and revelation, is the only means of their spiritual knowledge, beyond which they cannot go.

The learned Parkhurst, seems to have been somewhat bewildered on the subject of God's grace, on account of a want of proper discrimination here. He observes, that "Grace denotes the gracious and unmerited assistance of the Holy Spirit, in his miraculous gifts. But although I firmly believe in his blessed operations and influences on the hearts of ordinary believers, yet, that grace is ever used particularly for those, is more than I dare, after attentive examination, assert." The miraculous gifts, under the influence of which the religion of Jesus Christ in all its parts was revealed, confirmed and recorded, have ceased, because there was no necessity for their continuance, after the objects of them were accomplished; and his blessed operations and influences are exerted upon the human mind now, by and through that word. By this word, God gives faith to unbelievers, and in no other way; and through it he *sanctifies* believers; by it he teaches

them nothing more than is found in its sense and meaning, and he teaches all alike. If there be any difference in their religious views and faith, he is not the author of it as far as it is unscriptural. In this case all are ordinary believers, and God imparts his gracious influences to their hearts, through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, by the truth. He sanctifies them through the truth.

Some of John's disciples, who were true believers to a limited extent, said, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. Acts xix, 2. Christians are sensible that their views and feelings in regard to religious subjects, have undergone an important and essential change, but they are not conscious that the change was effected by any thing more than a clearer view and knowledge of the truth, and a deeper and more lively sense of its practical nature and importance. They are convinced from the views, affections and desires of their minds and hearts, in regard to spiritual and moral subjects, that they have experienced a change. They judge from the correspondence of the states of their own minds, with what is recorded in the word of God, of the fruits of the Spirit, that they are born of the Spirit, and are new creatures. In the history of their experience, however, they cannot detect the least suspension of their voluntary agency. They are not conscious of any physical influence of the Spirit exerted upon them, which was apart and distinct from the word of God's grace, and from what they had seen and heard, concerning his salvation given to us in Christ. They have new views and new states of feeling concerning God and his religion, and the character and offices of Jesus Christ, as the Saviour. They are conscious that a change has been effected, and that it is a spiritual moral change, a transfer of the affections from the world, and from sensual and sordid objects,

to God, in entire consistency with the nature and laws of moral agency, produced by the discernment and belief of the truth in Christ Jesus. When we look into the word of God's grace, we find, that the rich provisions of the new covenant, which secure the remission of sin, the impartation of God's Spirit, and eternal life to the true believer in Jesus Christ, through faith, have been imparted to these believers, because they manifest the fruits of them. Being justified by faith they have peace with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in the hope of his glory.

All Protestant Christians agree, that since the immediate revelations of the Spirit ceased, all that is true, and all that can be known of divine things, is to be found in the sense and meaning of the written word of God, and that man's religion is most pure and spiritual, which is most correspondent in understanding, will, affections and conduct, with the sense and meaning of that word, although he may not be able to explain philosophically any thing about it. Sinners are converted by the word of God's Spirit, and not by speculations and theories concerning his operations.

The out-pouring of the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of the Spirit, and the seal and confirmation of the Spirit, as these terms relate to the miraculous operations and revelations of the Spirit, were incident to the Apostolic age, and are forms of expression which answer to, and describe facts and things that then existed, and which were essential to the commencement and establishment of the christian religion and church, as they are by the record of them, to their present existence and perpetuation.

Upon the truth of the record of these facts, and the knowledge of the record, the conversion of sinners, the

faith of christians, and the formation of the christian character depend, and ever have depended, since the Apostolic age, and will continue to depend through all succeeding time. The gospel record is the mould of the christian character, and as that mould has at any time been mutilated or marred, or corrupted, so have been the defects of the christian character formed by it.

All that can be done properly and truly to propagate the christian religion, is necessarily limited by, and is dependent upon, *the recorded word of God*, and must consist in making the sense and meaning of it known to mankind, that they may understand, believe and practise it, that they may be spiritually holy and happy. That recorded word is the christian religion. The history of every age proves the truth of these remarks, although the christian world has been very slow to learn it.

After the long period of Roman Catholic superstition, ignorance, idolatry and darkness, it was difficult to learn that the scriptures are the ordained means of spiritual light, and of divine influence, by which God communicates religion to the human mind, and renews the heart.

The material substances and powers in the natural world, were created and made in six days, by the immediate miraculous power of God, and all the effects which God now produces in nature, are referable to, and are dependant upon them. God works by them. This we know by faith; and hence, to the *believing* mind, the heavens declare the *glory* of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. So it is in regard to the christian religion. Its whole truth is in the record, as Protestants say, in opposition to the Roman Catholics, and was put there in the Apostolic age by the revelations and inspirations of the Spirit. This truth is now the divine means of enlightening the world, and all the effects that God produces



in the conversion of sinners to himself, are through and by this word. In the accomplishment of these ends he employs preachers and teachers. What other objects do Missionaries labour for among the heathen, but to translate them into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, through faith in him, in whom they have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins?

All the predictions and prophecies of the out-pourings and gifts of the Spirit, made by the old testament Prophets, related to the introduction and establishment of the covenant of the Spirit, or of the gospel, and to the spiritual blessings secured in and communicated by it, all of which by the divine constitution of things, depended upon, and were to flow from, the death and mediation of Jesus Christ. And all the special and particular promises that Christ made to his disciples, and especially to the Apostles before he died, and after he died and rose from the dead, before he ascended to heaven, of the gifts and operations of the Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and his inspirations and revelations, related to the same subjects and the same objects. These promises of Christ before he died, are found in John vii, 37-39: xiv, 15-17, 26: xv, 26, 27: xvi, 8-10, 12-16. His promises after he rose from the dead, and before he ascended, are recorded in Luke xxiv, 46-49: Mark xvi, 15-20: Acts i, 3-8: Math. xxviii, 18-20. The fulfillment of these promises were the accomplishment of ancient prophecies.

In the Acts of the Apostles, beginning with the second chapter, we have a history of the first thirty years of the religion and church of Jesus Christ, after he was glorified, beginning on the day of Pentecost. In that history, we find the interpretation and meaning, and use of the predictions and promises of the out-pourings of the Spirit, made by the Prophets in the Old Testament, and by Christ in the New.

*The Spirit was bestowed upon none but believers.—*

His offices and agencies were to reveal the things of Christ to the Apostles and other disciples, by immediate revelations and inspirations, and *through them* to others, who were unbelievers, for their conversion to God. The words of the Apostles thus revealed by the Spirit, were *confirmed by signs* or by *miraculous works*, which were exhibited to the external senses of the hearers and spectators. These were employed in making known, and in confirming the divine purpose of God in the gospel, which had before been secret, or but partially revealed, for the salvation of man.

Unless we attend strictly to the historical facts and statements, as detailed in the Acts of the Apostles, we shall misapprehend the truth, in respect to those upon whom the Holy Ghost was poured out, and the object of it as many have done, and the means by which the three thousand Jews were converted on the day of Pentecost; and the means by which all other conversions were effected, as they are stated in the word.

The Spirit was promised by Joel, to be poured out *upon all flesh*: ch. ii, 28. "All flesh," Henry observes, "in this place means some of all nations, conditions and sexes." Those persons of each nation upon whom the Spirit was poured out, represented the whole of that nation or class of people, to which they belonged. And the out-pouring was a fulfillment of ancient prophecies, and a proof of their truth, as they were of Christ's promises, and they were an earnest and pledge of God's salvation to *all who should believe*, for the Spirit was bestowed upon none but believers. The out-pouring of the Spirit, which was the promise of the Father, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, spoken of by John the Baptist, and by Jesus Christ, (Math. iii, 11: Acts i, 5,) which were bestowed upon believers,

indicated the spiritual nature of the religion, and the reign of Jesus Christ, and the universality of the blessings of the gospel to all people who should believe.

The out-pouring of the Spirit, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which were bestowed upon believers *after* Christ ascended into heaven, sealed and confirmed the truth, that his sufferings and death were expiatory and vicarious, and were appointed and endured by the decree of God, and that he offered himself as a sacrifice for sin, which was accepted by God; and in consequence of which, he was made our High Priest forever.

The Spirit was poured out upon the one hundred and twenty disciples on the day of Pentecost, who were by the direction of Jesus Christ, all together in one place, waiting for the promise of the Father, and for power from on high, consisting in the miraculous gifts and inspirations of the Holy Ghost. Under their influence, and by the authority of them, they were to go into all the world and preach repentance and remission of sin, through the death and resurrection and reign of Jesus Christ, to every creature. They were commanded to begin at Jerusalem, where they were baptized with the Holy Ghost, by which they were enabled to understand, and to preach the gospel to all nations.

The gift of the Holy Ghost was promised to the three thousand, after they should repent and be baptized into the remission of sin, or into the salvation of God in the gospel, in the name, or on account of Jesus Christ, by Peter, who asked him and the rest of the Apostles what they should do to be saved, under an affecting sense of their guilt and danger. The gift of the Holy Ghost promised to them, was doubtless the same that they saw possessed and manifested in cloven tongues of fire, and in the use of foreign languages or tongues by the hundred

and twenty disciples, but which the disciples of John the Baptist had not heard was to be received, who Paul saw at Ephesus. Acts xix, 2. This gift of the Holy Ghost, they doubtless received after they changed their minds, and believed in Jesus Christ and were baptized. They received it as a seal and confirmation of the truth of all that they had seen and heard, and by the operations and revelations of which, they were fully taught the end of the Mosaical economy, and the truth of the gospel.

There appears to have been the utmost propriety in promising the Spirit to the three thousand Pentecostal Jews, and in giving it to them *after* they should reform, or renounce Moses and the law, for the remission of their sins, and receive Jesus Christ and the gospel by faith, and *be baptized into the remission of sin in the name or on account of Jesus Christ*. The Spirit being bestowed upon them after these things, sealed and confirmed the truth that the old Jewish covenant and laws, on which they had relied for salvation were abolished, and that no reliance could be placed upon them, as the Jews had done for remission of sin; and that remission and salvation were to be found in Jesus Christ alone, who God had made both Lord and Christ; and that *baptism* was an ordinance of divine appointment, by which Judaism was renounced, and Christ and his religion and salvation were professed. The record of these things will prove the same to all succeeding generations if properly understood.

The Law of Moses had been published by the direct authority of God himself, manifested by the most stupendous miracles, and the covenant into which the Jewish nation entered with Jehovah, having been confirmed and sealed by the same, as his distinct and peculiar people, nothing short of miraculous and supernatural testimony,

given by the same Jehovah, could convince them that the Jewish economy had terminated by divine appointment, and that the gospel was established as the only religion. This proved that Jesus Christ is *indeed* Messiah, and the only Saviour, of whom Moses and the Prophets did write; and that they that believe in him, possess the divine favour. The Jews had once been baptized into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea; they are now to be baptized into Christ in water, and to put him on. They were buried with Christ by baptism into death, having died to sin by faith in his cross.

The Jews, who attended on the day of Pentecost out of every nation under heaven, and who were converted on that day to the christian religion and at other times before they returned to their own country, and possessing the gift of the Holy Ghost which was a proof and confirmation of the truth of the gospel, when they returned and preached the gospel to their own countrymen, confirmed it with signs following, as Christ promised and as Mark has recorded it. Mark xvi, 14-20. The Spirit was also poured out upon the Samaritans, after they believed and were baptized into Jesus Christ, in answer to the prayers, and under the imposition of the hands of Peter and John. Acts viii, 15, 17. This proved to them and to the Jews, that God had made no difference between them, and that under the new covenant they were included in one fellowship, and that there was no difference between them under the gospel. This baptism of the Holy Ghost, also confirmed the divine mission of Philip and the Apostles, and the truth of all that they said and did.

The Spirit was also poured out upon the Gentiles, but not in the order of time and events that it was on the three thousand Pentecostal Jews, and on the Samaritans. These last had to renounce their former divinely establish-

ed institutions, on which they had relied for remission of sin and salvation; whereas, the Gentiles had not been placed by God, under any system for remission of sin and salvation, and they had none to renounce as of divine authority. Accordingly, when Peter preached to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius, after they believed, and before they did any thing else, the Holy Ghost fell upon them as he did upon the Apostles themselves, and the one hundred and twenty disciples at the beginning. "While Peter was yet speaking these words," (after what he had spoken before,) or just as he had concluded speaking them, by saying, "to him (Christ) gave all the Prophets witness, that through his name, *whosoever* believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," the Holy Ghost fell upon all them that heard and believed the word. They spake with tongues and glorified God, as Christ had promised. Mark xvi, 17: Acts x, 44-46.

Peter, in the next chapter, calls this out-pouring the baptism of the Holy Ghost, of which Christ had spoken. Acts xi, 15-17. After that they believed they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which was an earnest of their inheritance before they were baptised in water. In the case of the Gentiles, there was no imposition of Apostolic hands after or before baptism, nor prayers employed, as there had been in the case of the Samaritans in imparting spiritual gifts, in confirming their faith. They were *confirmed and sealed by Christ himself as the Apostles had been*. Episcopal Bishops would do well to think of this when they labor among the Gentiles. Christ himself was the Diocesan Bishop and Administrator, and by confirming and sealing the salvation of these Gentiles, the moment that they believed before they were baptised in water, he seals and confirms the salvation of all true believers, without any regard to water

baptism or the imposition of hands; although it is their duty to be baptised after they believe. This baptism of the Holy Ghost, Peter, *the Apostle*, said was God's witness or testimony, who knew the heart, that *He* had put no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, having purified the heart of the Gentiles without water baptism, by faith. Acts xv, 7-9. The obedience required of these Gentiles, in order to their receiving the Holy Ghost was faith alone. And God gave to them the Holy Ghost, as his witness, when they obeyed him by believing in Jesus Christ, that he had purified their hearts. Acts v, 32: xv, 9.

The disciples of John the Baptist also received the Holy Ghost, after they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

The out-pouring, gifts and baptism of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon males and females, and upon some of all sorts and conditions among the Jews and Samaritans, and the Gentiles, who believed in Jesus Christ, were God's testimony, that Jesus Christ, through his expiatory sufferings and death, and sacrificial offering, is *Lord of all*, and is constituted Prince and Saviour, and is head over all things to the church, which is his body. They prove, also, that the gracious provisions of the new covenant, embrace in one fellowship all true believers among Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles, male and female, bond and free; "for by one Spirit they were *all* baptized into one body or church, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and were all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii, 13. They moreover prove, seal and confirm the fact, that water baptism has nothing to do, in the sight of God, with the actual remission of the sins of the ungodly, by which they are taken into the divine favour, but that he purifies their hearts by faith before they are baptised, and that baptism is the *answer of a good* conscience towards God.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to the multitude, "*this which ye now see and hear*, is that which was spoken by Joel the prophet," it is the accomplishment or fulfilment of it; or, as Mr. Henry says, "this is that effusion of the Spirit upon all flesh which should come, and we are to look for no other, no more than we are to look for another Messiah. This Spirit will, according to the same promise continue in the church, and work all its works in it *by the means of the scriptures and the ministry.*"

Whatever the Spirit may do by means of the scriptures and the ministry, he will reveal nothing new, nor add any thing new to the scriptures—he will give no new sense or meaning to the words he spoke and wrote by the Evangelists and Apostles. The sense and meaning now are the same that he gave to the words and sentences, when they were first revealed, and they will continue the same. It is the thought, or the sum of the thoughts, which the Holy Ghost expressed by his words. They all have relation to Jesus Christ. "He shall glorify me, said Christ; all things that the Father hath are mine, therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." John xvi, 12-16. This word is as competent to convert sinners now, as it ever has been; but it can convert no person without being in some degree understood and believed. It possesses, in its proper sense and meaning, a divine, gracious character, and is the medium through which the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, communicate his spiritual, gracious, moral light and influence, to the understanding and hearts of men.

The out-pourings of the Spirit, in the gifts he bestowed, and his revelations, not only revealed the word of God by which the things of God are made known in the gospel, but they sealed and confirmed the truth of all that the Prophets and Christ had said relative to himself and



his religion. They also sealed and confirmed the divine mission of the Apostles, and the truth of all that they taught, in reference to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the atonement; and all that relates to the new covenant, and to the doctrines, ordinances and duties of the gospel.

The miraculous gifts were called the *seal* of the Spirit, in reference to the ancient use of seals to authenticate writings of importance, both in private and public transactions. Jerem xxxii, 6-14: 1 Kings xxi, 8. In allusion to this custom of authenticating writings by a seal, whatever may be said to justify a claim to any particular privilege, commission or authority, or to afford evidence and confirmation of any thing that has already taken place, or of a promise which is hereafter to take effect, is by an easy figure called a seal, as in the following cases, which relate to the gifts or sealing of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. ix, 2: Eph. i, 13, 14: John vi, 27: Eph. iv, 30: 2 Cor. i, 22.

As the visible descent of the Holy Ghost, and the powers which were conveyed upon the first christians, Jews and Gentiles, made the proper seal of the divine truth of the christian doctrines, and of their personal interest in the divine favour, so the power of imparting these extraordinary gifts in certain due proportions to other christians, that is, to those who believed in Jesus Christ, was the seal of the Apostolic office and authority. The gifts possessed by the Apostles and the power of imparting them, conferred upon them the character of infallibility in what they spoke and wrote of the christian religion, and sealed it as the word of God. These ceased with the Apostles, as did the Apostolic office and authority.

As a seal affixed to a declaratory deed is a sensible mark and token of the internal purpose, and invisible res-

olutions of the human mind, and is an evidence of the right and title of those who justly claim under it; so the sensible, miraculous and supernatural operations of the divine Spirit, connected with the word of God in the gospel, which he revealed in the days of the Apostles, were the sensible mark and token of the purpose and will of God, for the salvation of mankind, in the gospel or covenant of the Spirit. The sensible mark and token of the divine purpose and will in the remission of sin, is, that God remits sin and purifies the heart by faith in Jesus Christ, and that it is the duty of the believer to be baptized into him. These things, were sealed by the sensible, miraculous gifts of the Spirit. And we now look for the evidence of a sealed interest in God's favour and salvation under the new covenant in the gospel, which is our sealed title paper, in the integrity of our faith, or in its correspondence with the word, and in the piety of our lives, which exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.

The only hope that a christian has of eternal life, rests on the divine authority of the Apostles and Evangelists to preach the religion of Jesus Christ for the faith and salvation of sinners, and upon the divine truth of the gospel record. The Lord confirmed their word with signs following. The Holy Ghost sealed all that they said and did as of divine authority and truth, as he has done the record. These gifts of the Spirit ceased when the record was completed, and they have not been repeated. Were they now to be possessed by any class of men as they were by the Apostles, they would *unseal* and *nullify* the gospel covenant, as they did, in the beginning of the gospel, the old Jewish covenant.

One of the greatest corruptions that has ever infested the christian religion, has arisen from the Roman Catholic priesthood, arrogating to themselves Apostolic suc-

cession and authority. They have no shadow of right to claim Apostolic power and privilege without showing Apostolic credentials. Were they able to show such credentials, they would subvert the whole authority of the New Testament, and their own authority too, as derived from Peter; for they would, with *their new* Apostolic credentials, set aside the gospel that Peter preached, and overturn Peter himself, and introduce a new dispensation as Peter did. Such is the nature of Popery!

*The following were Apostolic qualifications.* It was essential to the Apostles of the New Testament, that they should have seen the Lord, and have been eye witnesses of what they testified to the world. 1 Cor. xii, 28, 29: Eph. iv, 11. This was laid down as an essential requisite in the choice of one to succeed Judas. Acts i, 21, 22. All of them could say, "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." 1 John i, 3. Paul was no exception here, for speaking of those who saw Christ after his resurrection, he adds, "And last of all he was seen of me." 1 Cor. xv, 8. And this he also mentions as one of the Apostolic qualifications. "Am I not an Apostle?" So that seeing that just one, and *hearing* the voice of his mouth, were necessary to his being a witness of what he thus saw and heard. Acts xxii, 6-15: Gal. i, 12.

Infallible inspiration was also essentially necessary to the Apostolic office. John xvi, 13: 1 Cor. ii, 10: Gal. i, 12.

They had not only to explain the true sense and spirit of the Old Testament, which was hid from the Jewish doctors, but also to give forth the New Testament revelation to the world, which was to be the unalterable stand-

ard, as it was to be the means of faith and the law of life, through all succeeding generations. Luke xxiv, 27: Acts xxvi, 22, 23: ch. xxviii, 23: 1 Pet. i, 25: 1 John iv, 6. It was therefore absolutely necessary that they should be secured against all error and mistake, by the unerring dictates of the spirit of truth. John xiv, 26: ch. xvi, 13: 1 Thes. ii, 13: 1 John iv 6.

Another Apostolic qualification was the power of working miracles and conferring the gifts upon others. 1 Cor. xii, 8-11. These were the credentials of the Apostolic mission. 2 Cor. xii, 12. To these qualifications may be added the universality of their mission. They had power as the oracles of God to men, to superintend and govern all churches. 2 Cor. xi, 28. They had power also to settle their faith and order, as models of future ages; and to determine all controversies; Acts xvi, 4; and to exercise the rod of discipline upon all offenders, whether pastors or flocks. 1 Cor. v, 3-6: 2 Cor. x, 8: ch. xiii, 10.

These Apostles, I repeat, have had no successors. I desire not to be uncharitable or censorious, but cannot refuse to express my astonishment that in these United States, Protestant Episcopalians are found, who deny to other ministers of the Gospel the right to preach and administer the ordinances of the Gospel, and who refuse to unite with them in the worship of God, on account of their supposed exclusive apostolic authority; their pretensions are more extravagant than are those of the Evangelical Episcopalians of Great Britain under their religious establishment.

The editors of the Christian Observer, one of the most talented and evangelical periodicals in the world, edited by Episcopalians in London, in their notice of a publication of Bishop Hobart, of New York, justify this observa-

tion. They observe that Bishop Hobart, who was a *high church-man*, *I suppose*, “was quite sincere in his opinion respecting the *evil tendency* of the Bible Society; and particularly on account of the union in it of churchmen and dissenters, for our American Episcopalian brethren, though but a small portion of the population of their country, and wholly unconnected with the State, speak of all non-Episcopalians as “dissenters.” With us in England, the term is neither harsh nor inappropriate; for it means only “non-conformists” as respects the established church; but what it means in the United States, we cannot so clearly understand; and the use of it appears exceptionable, because it seems to imply a spirit, which would exclude from the visible pale of Christ’s church, all who do not adopt the doctrines and discipline of a very small, though highly respectable minority of trans-Atlantic Christians. We could wish, therefore, that our American Episcopalian friends would avoid this term, which, in *their* lips either means nothing whatever, or means something, which with all our veneration for Episcopacy — and we are far from intending to underrate the importance of our own truly apostolical code, either doctrinal or “regimental” — is, we think, too sectarian and bigoted to find a place in any candid and impartial bosom. Let the church of Rome call other churches heretical and schismatical, if it pleases, but let not Protestants follow its evil example.” *Christ. Obs.* vol. xxvi, p. 618.

As the Apostles published and settled the Christian faith, an argument for the apostolic office, in subsequent ages, is sometimes derived from the supposed necessity there is for Apostles to explain the apostolic writings, and to preserve the faith. The Roman Catholic successors of the Apostles have explained away, or corrupted many of the essential doctrines and duties of the Gospel, and have

ordained rites and ceremonies, which are not found in the New Testament, under their pretended Apostolic authority. If they, or Protestant Episcopalians, possess by divine appointment apostolic authority and power, they doubtless possess apostolic qualifications; if so, they have a divine right to do whatever they please, and the world is bound to obey them. They are infallibly secured against all error in speaking and writing, by the unerring dictates of the Holy Ghost. These things, however, they must prove by doing the works of Apostles, before they can justly claim that authority.

The revelations written by the Evangelists and Apostles, which compose the New Testament record, are the explanations of the Holy Spirit himself of the Old Testament—and they explain fully the things which Christ taught his disciples obscurely before his death, and make known the “many things” that he had to tell them, which they could not bear before his death and glorification. Where now, I ask, in the whole book of God, is it promised that the Spirit shall, by *another* revelation, other than the one he made to the Apostles, and which is recorded in the New Testament, *explain* the *explanations* he gave to the Apostles, in order that men shall understand and believe the word of God? Were such explanations to be really made by the Spirit, they would be as justly entitled to a place in the New Testament as the word of God, as any thing therein contained is. But to what sect or party of Christians have these new explanatory revelations of the Spirit been made, by which the revelations and explanations he made to the Apostles and Evangelists, agreeably to Christ’s promise to them, have been explained? Or, does he make a different explanation to each different sect, suited to its creed and party views and peculiarities, of what he revealed and explained to the Apostles? If he

does, the Holy Spirit is a *party* spirit! This is not true. If the Spirit makes new explanations by immediate operations and revelations of what he revealed to them, he must do it by the use of words: are these words more intelligible and plain than are the words by which he revealed the things of God to the Apostles, which are recorded as the word of God, or have they a different meaning from their words? What are the words by which he explains them? Are they Chaldee, Hebrew, Greek, or English words? Do not these last explanations require still other explanations of the Spirit, that they may be understood? In this way the enquiry might run on and be endless, and it might be demanded that each of the subsequent explanations of the Spirit, be *sealed and confirmed* by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, in proof that they are the revelations of God, as were the apostolic revelations. These absurdities are the consequence of denying to the word of God a sense and meaning which God gave to it when he first revealed it, and which is permanently and infallibly the same; and of denying to the human mind powers and susceptibilities which God gave to it, and which it did not lose by the fall, and which he sustains by his immediate power, for learning and understanding the truth of his word, and for believing and feeling it by the due exercise of them under the direction and influence of suitable instruction and cultivation. These are the reasons, too, why the scriptures are so little read, understood, and confidently and practically believed in *as the word of God*.

The word of God is the same that it ever has been since it was revealed, and its meaning must be learnt and derived from its grammatical and historical sense and meaning. The human mind is the same in its original powers and susceptibilities, that it ever has been since the

fall. And the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are the same, and employ the same spiritual means of instruction, influence and agency, in advancing the Christian religion in the human mind, that they have done, since it was established. They promote the same great objects; they glorify Jesus Christ as Lord of all in the scheme of salvation, and convert sinners by the Gospel, and produce a oneness in faith and heart in all those who believe in Jesus Christ, through the word of the Apostles. John xvii, 21. Every thing that is done that is inconsistent with these things in religion, they do not do, nor approve of. God has given to the mind a constitution, which renders it capable of receiving impressions from his word, and of investigating its sense and meaning, and of understanding and feeling its truth *under his immediate sustaining power*; and by the operation and influences of his word, it is capable of existing in all the religious states which form the consciousness of the Christian life. In the order and arrangement of the divine economy, under the reign and mediation of Jesus Christ, God has ordained certain spiritual means for the improvement of the spiritual powers and capabilities of man, which bear the impress of his mercy and grace. Pardon of sin, and the divine influence, are communicated to the soul through belief and confidence in Jesus Christ. In this divine order and arrangement, God has decreed that man must act as a moral being to gain and possess these blessings — God is as much engaged to sustain this order of things in religion, according to which faith is obtained by hearing his word, and by searching the scriptures and understanding them, as he is in sustaining any part of the order of nature. The whole circle of moral agency, and of human responsibility, is based upon it, as is the whole process of the future judgment. All this is in strict accordance with the fact, that



without Christ we can do nothing; and that salvation, from first to last, is wholly of grace, and is the gift of God. Christ said, "ye do err, not knowing the scripture nor the power of God. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they would not have had sin — but now they have no cloak for their sin." The exercises in which God requires men to be engaged, and upon which he suspends the communication of Gospel truth and grace to the heart, and which are rational services, are *to hear*, and *read* and *search the scriptures*, and *to believe them*; to meditate upon them and the things they reveal; and habitually to pray to God for his enlightening influences upon the heart, and to practise all the duties of the gospel, and to train and discipline their minds in the spirit and temper of it.

I believe with Dr. A. Clarke, that God withholds the power of belief from no person who suitably uses the means which he has ordained to produce it, or by which he imparts it. They may be slighted, not used, or misused, in consequence of which is that declaration of Jesus Christ, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." The Spirit of God is every where present, but his *religion-giving operation is by his word understood and believed*, and is exerted through the truth upon the mind. Were these things to be practically believed and acted on by Bible-class teachers, and by the preachers of the Gospel, and by Christian parents, and Christians in general, how very different would be the state and progress of religion in our world!—And how very different would be Christianity itself in the knowledge of the scriptures, and in the love and fellowship among the saints, from what it now is!

Were all Christians united in the sentiment, that God has predestinated according to his own purpose and grace, who works all things after the counsel of his own will,

that he will gather the world together, through their labors and efforts in Jesus Christ, by the Gospel; and were they all to act practically upon it in union and harmony, with a single eye to the glory of the great Redeemer, in imparting the sense and meaning of the Gospel, to the minds of men, the present exertions employed in learning and talents, in labor, expense and prayer, would convert the whole world in thirty years. There would not probably be one infidel on this continent at the end of five years. Every child would be converted by the time it would be six or seven years old, by the knowledge and belief of the truth—Christian truth and affection would have the pre-eminence in all the circles and conditions of society, and would manifest themselves in activity and zeal with knowledge and godly love. Protracted meetings would be the occasion, and the religious instruction and prayerful exertion, according to the Gospel of God, would be the means of converting all who would attend them; and, substantial Christian enjoyments and happiness would rise to an immeasurable height above what they now are. The faith and confidence with which I speak these things, do not exceed the faithfulness, love and power of God in Christ Jesus, to accomplish them. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.” God is altogether on the side of man’s salvation and happiness, but man must acquiesce and go along with him in the plan and in the use of the means he has ordained for achieving them. Nothing has ever been done since his plan and means were fully revealed without this. Jesus Christ by the Grace of God tasted death for every man, and he is now the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe. “All things are ready, saith the Amen, the faithful and the true witness, the first and the last. And the

Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." The truth of these things is sealed and confirmed by the Holy Ghost.

## ESSAY XIV.

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### BAPTISM.

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BAPTISM is an ordinance of the New Testament, instituted by Jesus Christ, by which a believer in him professes his faith and puts him on. The action is immersion into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, given to the Apostles by Jesus Christ, was in consequence of all power having been given to him in heaven and in earth, in consequence of his death; and the command to baptize was inseparably connected with the *preaching* and *believing* the Gospel.

John preached the baptism of repentance, and baptized those who professed their willingness to reform and receive the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was expected shortly to come, and were willing to frame their lives in a manner agreeably to that expectation. Luke iii, 7-14. John's preaching and baptism among the Jews, were preparatory to their receiving him. He came baptizing with water that Jesus Christ might be made manifest to Israel, which was effectually done in a miraculous manner, when he baptized him in Jordan. Math. iii, 13-17: John i, 31-34.

As baptism is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, and is associated with his religion, authority and kingdom, and derives all its meaning and use from him, in considering

its design and use, we must keep in view his majesty and glory, the nature and extent of his dominion and kingdom, and the spiritual nature of his religion and subjects as distinguished from all things else.

Jesus Christ came as the *light* and *deliverer* of the world. In his whole teaching he discovered a consciousness that never forsook him, of a relation that he sustained to the whole human race. He came as the author of a *new, miraculous, universal religion*, based upon his own death and resurrection, which was the most magnificent that ever entered into the mind of man. No other man ever thought or dreamed, of subjecting all nations to a common faith, in peace and love.

The partition wall between Jew and Gentile, which seemed to reach to heaven, was to be broken down. The Jewish state was to be abolished, and the temple prostrated, and the idolatry of the Gentile world was to be extinguished; and upon the ruins of them all, were to be erected a spiritual religion and church, in which all men would meet as brethren, and which would be the common and equal property of Jews and Gentiles.

Jesus Christ, in all that he said and did, previous to his crucifixion, built the prospect of his success on his own death and resurrection, and the glory that should follow. He uniformly taught his disciples, that he *must* die and rise again before his religion and his own character could be fully revealed, and before his kingdom could be erected and understood. An essential part of his religion and reign, was the resurrection of the dead, and a future existence and judgment, based upon his own resurrection and power. The natural world, under God's sentence of death for sin, contained no provisions or principles for reviving the dead. The sun and the rain which cover the tomb with verdure, send no vital influence to the mouldering

body. If man is to live again, he is not to live through any known laws or powers of nature, nor by any union with the first sinful mortal man, but by a power altogether supernatural, and by a union with the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, and is the resurrection and the life. Of this he would be ignorant unless informed and assured of it by supernatural revelation and miraculous works. Christ was to ascend his throne through his own death, by which he was to abolish death, and enter into the holiest by his own blood, which was shed for the remission of sin. And when exalted as Lord of all, and seated as King upon Jehovah's holy hill of zion, the heathen were to be given to him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; they were all to be made one in him. The Gospel was to be the moral instrument of his great spiritual power, by which the world was to be subdued to the obedience of faith under him.

All nations and people were to cast off the ferocity of their nature, to be renewed in the image of God, and become one in him. The self-righteous Pharisee, the hated Samaritan, and despised publican, and far-off idolatrous Gentile, were to be brought into one fellowship. They were to compose one body or church under him, who is the head of the church, in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Their enmity was to be destroyed by his cross through his death. And there was to be one baptism, by which all were to be brought into one visible fellowship.

To accomplish these things, after he rose from the dead, and before he ascended into heaven and took possession of his deserved throne, he said unto his Apostles, "Thus it is written and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance

and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," and then gave them their commission, in the following words, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Luke xxiv, 46, 47: Matth. xxviii, 18-20.

The commission given to the Apostles to preach and baptize, recorded by Matthew, contains the only form of words to be used in baptism. Mark has left it to Matthew to inform us *into whom* or *into what* the Apostles were to baptize those who believed. These words in Matthew, in their full sense and meaning, comprehend all that is said in every other part in the New Testament, relative to the ordinance of baptism, as administered by the Apostles under the commission that Christ gave to them. The record of Matthew plainly indicates the unity and agency of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as I have shown in a former Essay, in the authority of Jesus Christ, and in the religion of the gospel, and the faith and salvation of every true believer. Therefore, whatever else may be included in baptism, those who believe the gospel and are baptized with scriptural views of it, are baptized into the faith that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are unitedly concerned in the supremacy of Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial office and reign, and in the religion and salvation of the gospel.

Dr. Dwight, on Matth. xxviii 19, observes, that "Persons are baptized not *in* but (*eis*) *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; that is, by Christ's appointment they are introduced into his family, and take his name upon them as being his children."

Another Greek scholar gives it, "baptizing them (not *in* but) *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; that is, introducing them into the profession of that manifestation of the divine character, (for that is the meaning of *name* here,) in which God reveals himself the Restorer of fallen man, through the atonement and mediation of the Son, and the influences and quickening of the Spirit."

I formerly stated and endeavoured to prove, that without the revelation of God, in the personal manifestations of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the fallen state of man, there is no idea or knowledge of God in the world, and that the doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, in their practical development, operation and influence, are the christian religion.

Mark, in his account of the commission given by Jesus Christ to the Apostles to preach and baptize, informs us that Christ said unto them, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues," &c.; and he subjoins, "and they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following." Mark xvi, 15-20. Mark does not inform us into what they are to be baptized, or whether Christ in this place meant the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which *he* was to administer, or baptism in water: perhaps he meant both. The signs which he promised should follow, were the direct effects of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, in every case, and confirmed the word of the Apostles, as we have seen in the last Essay. Simon Magus was not baptized with the Holy Ghost, and was not saved.



The Apostles began to preach at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, after they received power from on high. The introduction of the kingdom of heaven and the first discourse delivered, we have an account of in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Peter by referring to the ancient prophets, and by what was exhibited to the eyes and ears of the spectators and auditors, proved that Messiah had come, that the men of Judea and Jerusalem, who heard him, had with wicked hands crucified him, and that God had raised him up from the dead, and made him both Lord and Christ; and that the great and dreadful day of the Lord was at hand, which God had foretold by the prophets should come, and which would destroy the Jewish state and nation. A number of them "were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, *into* the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized." Acts ii, 37-41.

I have given verse 38 *into the remission of sins*, instead of *for* or *in order to* the remission of sins, as Dr. Doddridge and others have given it, because the meaning of *into* and *for* or *in order to*, in this place is essentially different, and because the same word *eis* is rendered *into* in every other place in the New Testament where it stands in the same connection with the gospel ordinance of baptism.

The instruction and exhortations of Peter to these Jews

to reform or change their minds and be baptized into the remission of sin on account of Jesus Christ, which is the same as to be baptized into his salvation, agrees in my apprehension with the direction of Jesus Christ to the Apostles, to baptize believers, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. From our common version, it would seem, that Peter intended the Pentecostal Jews to be baptized in order to obtain the remission of their sins, and many so regard it. This rendering seems to have originated at a period soon after the Apostolic age, from a belief that water in John iii, 5, meant baptismal water, and which rendered baptism absolutely necessary to salvation. This is the reason why the early Fathers speak of baptism as of the same meaning with regeneration. Tertullian, who lived about two hundred years after the birth of Christ, said that John iii, 5, "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," related primarily to baptism, and made it absolutely necessary to salvation; "What, said he, can be more miraculous than to see that by washing the body by external baptism, we efface at the same time the mortal stain of the soul, and when that stain is once taken away, the punishment is likewise remitted to us. There is no doubt to be made, but that at present baptism is necessary to salvation. Jesus Christ has made a law for it, and prescribed the manner of it. *If a man be not born again of the water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*, which does universally establish the necessity of baptism."

In the Bishop's Bible, which was published in England in 1568, Acts ii, 38, was translated in accordance with this opinion of John iii, 5. And King James in 1606, gave directions and rules, agreeably to which, his translators were to follow the translation of the Bishop's Bible. His fourth

instruction was the following: "When any word hath diverse significations, (as was the case with *eis*,) that one is to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most ancient Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of faith." Reese, in his *Cyclopedia*, says, that "the two sayings of our Saviour in Mark xvi, 16, and John iii, 5; were the foundation of the supposed necessity of baptism, in order to salvation, in the age immediately following that of the Apostles, and that accordingly we find baptism and regeneration were used as synonymous terms. It was then imagined, that there was something in the rite of baptism itself to which pardon was annexed, and in general it was thought, that this sanctifying virtue was in the water. Some asserted, that the Holy Spirit was always given in baptism, and that he descended upon the water of baptism like a dove. Austin says, that the baptismal water touches the body and purifies the heart." These have ever been Roman Catholic opinions, and were the occasion of the decrees of the Council of Trent, on the subject of baptism and justification, which I have recorded in pages 177-8.

These opinions of baptism and justification in opposition of the gospel views of these subjects, were the causes of the corruption of the religion and church of Jesus Christ, from the second century, and are in a great measure the cause of them now. Calvin acknowledged and lamented these things in his day, notwithstanding he was a Platonic philosopher, and practised infant baptism. He says, "there are some who attribute to the sacraments, I know not what latent virtues, which are nowhere represented as communicated to them by the word of God. By this error the simple and inexperienced are dangerously deceived, being taught to seek the gifts of God, where they never can be found, and being gradually

drawn away from God, to embrace mere vanity, instead of his truth. By representing the sacraments as the cause of justification, it envelops the minds of men, naturally too much inclined to the earth, in gross superstition, leading them to rest in the exhibition of a corporeal object rather than in God himself." He declared that baptism was of no advantage whatever to any person until after he believes. His leading principles of reformation were, justification by faith without works, and a denial that baptism conferred any spiritual blessings or church privilege, previous to faith. Why he continued to practice infant baptism with this opinion of its uselessness I cannot tell, unless it was as an ear mark to distinguish Protestant children from Roman Catholic children. If baptism is in the place of circumcision, it must be in the place of Abraham's circumcision, who is the Father of all that believe. His circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of the faith he had *before* he was circumcised. As all of his *spiritual* seed are believers in Jesus Christ, they ought not to be baptized until *after* they believe. No man was ever circumcised on account of his faith but Abraham, and none ought to be baptized without faith.

If Peter's teaching and exhorting the Jews on the day of Pentecost to "repent and be baptized *into* the remission of sin, for the sake of Jesus Christ," be altogether different from his directing them to repent and be baptized, *in order to obtain remission of sin*; and if the former be of the same meaning with the direction of Christ to baptize believers, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and the latter is not, it is important to ascertain the real difference between the two forms of expression. The importance of the subject is seen in its bearing on the scripture doctrine of Justification, which was treated in a former essay, and upon the

personal views and objects of individuals, who are baptized. Christ has said, that not one jot or tittle of his word shall fail. The spiritual order and purity of his religion and church, depend upon preserving the scriptural sense and meaning of his word pure, even down to a monosyllable, and in acting according to it.

Groves, in his Greek and English dictionary, says, that *eis* is a preposition, governing the accusative case *in, into; to, unto, until; among, at, before, in presence of; on, upon; towards, against; as to, in respect of, concerning; through, by; for, for to, in order to; to the end that, so that.*

*Into* is the second rendering of the word *eis*, in the order that Groves has presented it; *for, or in order to*, is the twentieth and twenty-second. The following are Professor Stuart's remarks and criticisms on the subject. His object is to ascertain *the meaning of eis, as it is connected with baptism, the ordinance of the New Testament*, and of baptism in preceding *eis*, and not in any other connection. "The word baptize, may be followed by a *person* or a *thing*, (doctrine) which has *eis* before it. In the first place, when it is followed by a person, it means by the rite of baptism, to bind one's self to be a disciple or follower of a person, to receive or obey his doctrines or laws; for example, "all our fathers were under the cloud, and passed through the sea; and were all baptized (*eis*) into Moses *in* the cloud and *in* the sea." 1 Cor. x, 1-2. "For as many of you as were baptized (*eis*) into Christ, have put on Christ," that is, have professed to receive and rely upon him as Saviour, and bound yourselves to be his disciples and followers, and to receive and obey his doctrines and laws." Gal. iii, 27. "Were you baptized (*eis*) into the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest they should say that I baptized (*eis*) into my own name. 1 Cor. i, 13-15.

“Or it means, to acknowledge him as Sovereign, Lord and Sanctifier.” “Baptizing them (*eis*) into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Math. xxviii, 19. “When they heard this they were baptized (*eis*) into the name of the Lord Jesus.” Acts xix, 5.

“That *name* is used after *eis*, as it is in some cases, makes no difference in the sense. In Hebrew, “the name of the God of Jacob defend thee,” is just the same as “the God of Jacob defend thee.” And to call upon the the name of the Lord, is the same as to call upon the Lord.

“A person may be baptized into a thing, (doctrine). ‘I baptize you with water (*eis*) into repentance.’ Math. iii, 11. That is, into the profession of the reality and necessity of repentance, involving the idea that they themselves professed to be subjects of it. In Acts xix, 3.—“We were baptized (*eis*) into John’s baptism.” That is, “into the baptism of repentance.” Math. iii, 11: In 1 Cor. xii, 13.—‘We are all baptized into one body or fellowship.’ All in the like sense, viz: by baptism, the public acknowledgement is expressed of believing in, and belonging to one doctrine or one body.

“So in Acts ii, 38: ‘Baptized in the name or on account of Jesus Christ (*eis*) into the remission of sin’—That is, into the profession of the doctrine of remission; in other words, by baptism, a profession and acknowledgement of this doctrine *on account*, or *for the sake of Jesus Christ*, *was made*:” Christ was acknowledged as Saviour.

Another Greek scholar remarks, on Acts ii, 38, “I think any person acquainted with the original Greek, will agree with me in translating Acts ii, 38, differently from the common version, which reads, “Repent, and be baptized every one you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the emission of sin:” It ought to be, repent, or rather reform

or change your minds, and let every one of you be baptized (*cis*) into the doctrine of forgiveness of sin, for Christ's sake. To be baptized *into* a doctrine, is the ordinary phrase of the New Testament. The commission given to the Apostles, ought to be so rendered, "Baptizing them into the name," &c. Math xxviii, 19. So Rom. vi, 3, "As many of us as were baptized (*cis*) into Jesus Christ, were baptized *into* his death, that is, were baptized into the doctrine that he died for sinners." To be baptized *into Christ*, is to be baptized into him as Lord and Saviour. And as there is but one baptism, it is the same as to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as it is into the remission of sin, for Christ's sake.

The same author further observes, "Acts ii, 38, I do not think can, in justice, be made to bear any other sense than that which I have given it, viz: "let every one of you be baptized into that doctrine which teaches forgiveness of sin in the name or through the work of Jesus Christ. The Greek preposition *cis*, which belongs to "the forgiveness of sin," and not that one (*epi*), which precedes, "the name of Jesus Christ," is the preposition which in the Greek Testament usually indicates the direct object of baptism."

I cannot forbear giving the observations and criticisms, in part, of the editor of the new translation of the New Testament, by Drs. Campbell, Doddridge and McKnight, second edition, append. note 3. I do this to show the agreement of these Greek scholars, when criticizing the same word. His remarks are in favor of rendering the word *cis*, in Math. xxviii, 19, *into* instead of *in*, which are equally as applicable to rendering the same word in Acts ii, 38: *into* instead of *for*, or *in order to*, as Dr. Doddridge has given it in his translation, agreeably to the

early Fathers. "The changing of a syllable, may sometimes materially affect the meaning, when the changing a phrase does not."

"By what *inadvertency*, the King's translators gave (*eis*) *in* instead of *into*, in Math. xxviii, 19, and elsewhere gave it *into*, when speaking of the same ordinance, I presume not to say. But they have been followed by most of the modern translators, and with them they translate it *into* in other places where it stands in relation to the *institution* of baptism, as for example 1 Cor. xii, 13: Rom. vi, 3. Gal. iii, 27: Acts xix, 3: 1 Cor. i, 13. Our fathers were all immersed *into* Moses, *in* the cloud and *in* the sea. They were immersed *into* Moses—not *into* the cloud and *into* the sea—but *in* the cloud and *in* the sea, they were immersed *into* Moses. The authority by which any action is done is one thing, and the object for which it is done is another. None who can discriminate, can think that it is one and the same thing to be immersed *in* the name of the Lord, and to be immersed *into* the name of the Lord. The former denotes the authority by which the action is performed, the latter the object for which it is performed."

"To be immersed into the name of the Lord Jesus, was a form of speech in ancient usage, as familiar and significant as to enter *into* matrimony—into an alliance—to run into danger, &c. And when we analyze these expressions, we find they all import that the persons are either under the obligations or influence of those things into which they are said to enter, or into which they are introduced. Hence those immersed *into* one body (1 Cor. xii, 13) were under the influence and obligation of that one body." And I would say, that those immersed into the remission of sins, were under the influence of remission, on the day of Pentecost." "Those immersed into Moses,



assumed him as their law-giver, guide and protector, and risked every thing upon his authority, wisdom, power and goodness. Those who were immersed into Christ, put him on, acknowledged his authority and laws, and were governed by his will — and those who were immersed into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, regarded the Father as the fountain of all authority — the Son as the only Saviour — and the Holy Spirit, as the only advocate of the truth and teacher of Christianity.” \* \* \* \* \*

“They who are immersed into the name of Christ, assume his name, acknowledge him as Lord and Master, and look to him for support and protection” — and salvation. “This view of the matter made Paul thank God when the Christians in Corinth were assuming different names, (one the name of Paul, and another the name of Apollos, &c.) that he had immersed none, or few of them, lest the report should get abroad that he had immersed *into* his own name.” From the preceding remarks of these Greek biblical scholars, including Dr. Dwight, we see the design and use of baptism as a gospel ordinance, and that it is necessarily connected with the authority and religion of Jesus Christ. The Jewish nation, in the persons of the Fathers, had been baptized *into* Moses, in the cloud and in the sea. They were, on the day of Pentecost, to be baptized *into* Jesus Christ as Messiah and Saviour, which was the same as to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. What Horne has said in his *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Scriptures*, of the Jewish ideas of remission of sin, will enable us better to understand the meaning of Peter in Acts ii, 38; and to see the propriety of the remarks of Professor Stuart and others. Horne ob-

serves, that "the Jews assigned three grounds for remission of sin or justification before God, by which they were delivered from the guilt and punishment of sin, viz:

1. The extraordinary piety and merits of their ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the twelve Patriarchs, and the Covenant God made with them.

2. The knowledge of God through the law of Moses, and their diligence in the study of that law, which they esteem so holy as to make it a plea for the remission of sin.

3. The works of the Levitical laws, which were to expiate sin, especially circumcision and sacrifices; whence the Jews inferred that the Gentiles must receive the whole law of Moses in order to be justified; in other words, that there was no salvation out of the Jewish Church."

The old Covenant and Jewish economy were abolished by the death of Christ, and the Jews, on the day of Pentecost, were *instructed* and *exhorted* by Peter, to reform or change their minds, in accordance with the manifestations made to their senses of the truth of the introduction and establishment of the new covenant and gospel, and to renounce their former grounds on which they relied for the divine favor, and be baptized into the remission of sin, on account of Jesus Christ, who was made Prince and Saviour. They that gladly received the word were baptized into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as Christ had commanded. This was of the same meaning as to be baptized into Jesus Christ, or into the remission of sin, in his name, or for his sake. After they were baptized, they doubtless received the gift of the Holy Ghost as they saw the hundred and twenty disciples possess it, and as Peter promised, which sealed and confirmed the divine truth of all that Peter had said, and of all that they believed, and of baptism itself as an

ordinance of Jesus Christ, by which they were to renounce Moses and the law, and put on Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was made of God unto them wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, and they received him in the fullness of his character, as an entire and perfect Saviour, and bound themselves by their baptism, to rely upon him for every thing, as we formerly viewed him, as the light and deliverer of the world, and the author of a new, miraculous, spiritual and universal religion, whose majesty, glory and dominion, are without limits.

The Samaritans, also, when they heard the gospel and believed it, were baptized into Jesus Christ, as the Jews had been—and became one with the Jewish converts. This was the case also with the Gentiles. But owing to the difference of their previous religious and political state, from those of the Jews, there was some difference attending the introduction of the gospel among them, and their baptism. The Holy Ghost, as we saw in the last Essay, was poured out upon them after they believed, and before they were baptized in water, as a seal of the forgiveness of their sin. As there was but one baptism for Jew and Gentile, they were baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They, with the Jews, were made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, under the free, gracious provisions of the new covenant, obtained remission of sin through his blood, and put him on by baptism. They renounced their Gentileism, and came into the same fellowship with the Jews. They were sealed and confirmed by the baptism or the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as being in the possession and enjoyment of the divine favor before they were baptized in water. And Peter declares, that the gift of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon them after they believed and before they were baptized in water, as it was upon him and

the rest of the hundred and twenty disciples at the beginning (Acts ii, 1-4), was God's witness that he had put no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, having purified their hearts by faith. Acts xv, 7-9.

This accords with what was said in the Essay on Justification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Through the gospel of his grace, and justification or the remission of sin through faith in Jesus Christ, God granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life, and made them, with the believing Jews, the spiritual seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise.

#### THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM IS IMMERSION IN WATER.

The most astonishing and prominent facts in the Christian religion, are the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection of his disciples to a happy immortal life through him.

It would be passing strange that the Christian religion should have had no ordinance instituted by Christ to memorialize, and strikingly to represent these things. The supper represented his death, but not his burial and resurrection. If Christ be not risen, there is nothing true in the whole of his religion:—but he is risen. He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. A true faith in his death and resurrection, is the first principle of life in the soul. I do not intend to go into a protracted discussion of this subject. Every true believer in Jesus Christ does believe in his death and resurrection, and is actually justified through his blood, whether he believes in baptism by immersion or not. It is, however, greatly to be desired, that the truth in respect to the *one baptism*, as in every thing else, should prevail. A difference in this ought not to prevent Christian fellow-

ship. Our best Greek scholars agree, that the Greek word which is always used to express the ordinance of baptism, means nothing more nor less than to *dip* or *immerse*. It never expresses any thing but *mode*. *Bapto* signifies to *dip*, *tinge*, or *die*; but *baptizo*, to immerse alone. I will here employ some of the views of Carson on the subject of baptism. The following expression of Paul, cannot by any just principle of interpretation, be made to mean any thing else than that baptism is *immersion*, and it shows, too, that the proper subject of gospel baptism, has died to sin and risen with Christ in spirit, by faith in his cross, before he is baptized in water; that is, he *has obtained the remission of his sin*, through faith in the blood of Christ. "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. vi, 2-4.

As in Christ's death, we have died with him; so in baptism we are figuratively put into the grave along with him. Words cannot more plainly teach any thing, than these words teach that *in baptism we are buried with Christ*. Baptism, then, must not only contain a likeness to burial, but that likeness is emblematical. Baptism is not a figure of speech; it is an emblematical action. Baptism is also an emblem of the new life of the Christian: "that like as Christ was saved from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." We die with Christ to sin, through faith in his cross, and rise with him to a new life of holiness.

There is then something in baptism that is an emblem of a resurrection as well as of a burial. Immersion is a

mode that answers both, and it is the only mode that does so. In baptism we are emblematically laid in the grave with Christ, and we are emblematically raised with him out of it.

It is designed to point to our own resurrection, as well as to the resurrection of Christ. In baptism we profess our faith in the one as past, and in the other as future. What simplicity, what beauty, what edification is contained in this ordinance, and how necessary it is to keep the most striking facts of the gospel in our view! We are made partakers by faith in the death of Christ, by which we are justified. We do not become partakers in his death by being baptized into the faith of his death. We become partakers in the death of Christ by faith, before and without baptism; and would have been equally so had baptism never been instituted. In baptism, this participation in Christ is exhibited in figure, just as we are said to *wash away our sins in baptism*. Sins are washed away by faith in the blood of Christ, but they are symbolically washed away in baptism. Just so we become partakers in the death of Christ the moment that we believe; in baptism this participation is exhibited by a symbol.

The Christian has a real death, burial and resurrection with Christ by faith. He has all these also in baptism by figure. The previous death, burial, and resurrection with Christ *by faith*, must have really taken place before baptism, or baptism is misplaced and has no meaning; it is an emblematical action in that case, of nothing that has taken place in the subject of it. None then ought to be baptized in order to obtain the actual remission of sin. The believer is one with Christ by a real union. He is one with Christ as truly as he is one with Adam. He dies with Christ as truly as he fell with Adam. It is by the divine constitution of the New Covenant, that all true believer-

ers are one with him. When Christians are therefore said to have died with Christ by faith, there is no more figure than when it is said that they have died in Adam, or that they shall die themselves.

“How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Death here is a real death. But how are we dead? By faith in Christ, we are dead to sin—and in baptism this truth is exhibited in figure: “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? To be *baptized into Jesus Christ* imports the being baptized into the faith of his death as our substitute, but to be baptized into his death, imports that by baptism we are exhibited as dying along with him. The death in baptism is a figurative death, founded on the real death by faith; and the washing away of sin in baptism, is a figurative washing away of sin; but if it had not been *actually* washed away previously by faith in Christ’s blood, baptism would not be a figurative washing away of sin in the subject:—This was the case with Simon Magus, and it is the case with all those who are baptized in order to obtain the actual remission of their sin, and who had not obtained remission previously through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are not said to be *buried with Christ by faith, but buried with him by baptism into death*. This burial is not merely a burial by faith, but a burial by baptism. The language imports also that baptism has a reference both to Christ’s resurrection and our own life. “We are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” This is stated as the end of baptism, not as the end of faith. As baptism does not effect these things, it must be viewed as a *figure*. Baptism makes us die, buries us, raises us, only in *fig-*

ure; therefore when we are said to die, to be buried to rise in baptism, baptism must contain a likeness to these things.

It is not in baptism, nor by means of baptism, that we die with Christ really, or are made spiritually alive. This death and this life take place before baptism. So it is with the remission of sin, they all take place by faith in the cross of Christ. Baptism, then, can have these things ascribed to it only in figure. We wash away sins in baptism, just as we eat the flesh of Jesus Christ, in the Lord's Supper. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" How are the cup and the bread the communion of the blood and body of Christ? In figure. Just so baptism washes away sin. Just so in baptism we die, we are buried, and we rise. But the truth of the emblem is effected, not by baptism in any sense, but by faith. The death, burial and resurrection, which are ascribed to baptism, take place *in baptism*, and *by means* of baptism. The washing away of sins ascribed to baptism, is effected by baptism. This washing, this death, this burial and this resurrection, cannot be the washing, death, burial and resurrection which are effected by faith, and which take place before baptism. The reality of these things has already taken place by faith, but it is represented in figure as taking place in the ordinance, and by means of the ordinance. In the expressions *wash away sin by baptism, death, burial and resurrection in baptism*, there is no figure of speech. It is a figurative action, not a figurative expression. A symbol is not a figure of speech. Death, burial and resurrection, we do not consider as the primary meaning of baptism, and washing away sin as a secondary meaning. It takes both together to make one meaning. The ordinance has one meaning only. It not



only signifies washing away sin through faith in the blood of Christ, but denotes that such sins are washed away by our fellowship with him in his death.

Another passage that favors the view and import given of baptism, is 1 Cor. xv, 29: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they baptized for the dead?" There is in this passage an argument, and the object of baptism must be a scriptural object, otherwise it could not be an argument.

Baptism here plainly represents the resurrection of the saints from the dead, to inherit eternal life with Christ, and that his death and resurrection are a proof and pledge of it. To deny the resurrection of the dead, it would appear from this passage, sets aside the crowning design and meaning of baptism, and renders it of no consequence. And to deny that baptism is a representation and pledge of this, takes from it an essential part of its meaning. "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order." 1 Cor. xv, 21-23.

I repeat the question formerly stated, would it not be strange that in the Christian religion, which is based in, and rests upon the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and upon which the hope and assurance of the resurrection of his disciples depend, there should be no ordinance to represent the resurrection, either of Christ or his followers, although, in this very article, that religion is preeminently distinguished from all other religions? Is it not strange that it should be thought that baptism does not represent the resurrection of Christ and his people, although it is so

expressly asserted that, having died to sin by faith in his cross, they are *buried with him by baptism into death?* What shall they do who are baptized for their belief in the resurrection of the dead, if the dead rise not? The Supper represents the death of Christ, and baptism his resurrection. The resurrection of the dead is a fact that is altogether supernatural and miraculous, and is one of the most difficult facts to be believed that can be proposed to the human mind, and ever has been, and which could not be believed but for the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the miracles which the Apostles wrought in proof of it. These stand inseparably connected with the redemption and eternal salvation of the true believer through the blood of Christ, as his faith, hope and confidence are based in his death and resurrection, by the word of God.

At the same time that baptism is a symbolical action which represents the fact that the true believer is dead to sin, in a spiritual and moral sense, and is risen to newness of life with Christ through faith in his cross, it manifests, moreover, his faith in the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, which is passed, and his faith in his own resurrection, which is future. There could have been no proselyte baptism which preceded the baptism of the New Testament, that could have any connection with it, because that baptism emblematically represents and memorialize a *fact* that never existed before Christ rose from the dead, and it is an institution in a religion that never existed before, it being based in the new covenant, which was established by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Without the resurrection of the dead, which is an event which is alone incident to the new covenant, and is represented in the action of baptism, wherein believers are immersed in water into the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and are raised out of it, believers cannot inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Cor. xv, 50. Under the spiritual provisions and blessings of the new covenant, "the body of the saints is sown a natural body; it will be raised a spiritual body for as they have borne the image of the earthly, they shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Cor. xv, 49. Hence through that faith by which the mercy of God hath begotten us to the hope of another life, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. 1 Pet. iii, 5: Phil. iii, 20, 21. The complete work of regeneration cannot be effected without the resurrection of the body from the dead. With a view to Christ's commission given to the Apostles, to preach the gospel and to baptize, and with a view to the design and meaning of baptism, is it not really strange that the ordinance of baptism by immersion, should be regarded as a sectarian ordinance among Christians, and that there should be any sect that disowns it? There would be just as great propriety in asserting, that the doctrine of a change of heart, and of the resurrection from the dead of the saints to a glorious immortal life, are sectarian doctrines. And what is more strange still, is, that baptism itself, should have been made the occasion of more corruptions, divisions and persecutions in the religion and church of Jesus Christ, than any one thing that has ever occurred. These effects have resulted from two causes: the first was in detaching the ordinance from Jesus Christ himself and from the belief of the gospel, and from the spiritual nature of his religion and kingdom. The second was in the profanation of baptism by administer-

ing it for uses and purposes, and by ascribing to it virtues and properties, which the word of God does not authorize, and which are no where represented as communicated to it by the word of God.

The early Fathers—withdrawning their attention from the supremacy of Jesus Christ, and from the spiritual nature and universality of his religion and kingdom, and failing to regard baptism and the supper as subordinate to their promotion, and misapprehending the divine nature of the New Covenant administered by him, whose gracious blessings secure the remission of sin, and a new nature through faith in his blood to every true believer—gave to baptism itself the power of renewing, and of regenerating men's hearts—of remitting sin, and of justifying sinners before God. And thus baptism was perverted to a superstitious and idolatrous use, as was also the bread and wine in the Lord's supper. A few equivocal passages of scripture, by a gratuitous or tortured construction, were resorted to, to support them. By these means the ordinance of baptism and the supper, were made to occupy the place of Jesus Christ himself, who instituted them, and his religion and church became corrupted, and their immoralities became abominable; the salt lost its savour, and the mass became morally putrid.

The blood of Christ, which, through faith, cleanseth from all sin, was made to give way to baptismal water, and ceased to exert any purifying effect upon the heart. These evils, in some considerable degree, exist in the present day, and in some cases have been revived with new energy. Their only remedy is in a correct knowledge of the principles and truths of the gospel, and in pious godly living. The foundation of the whole superstructure of the gospel is laid in the principle of the justifi-

cation of sinners, or the method according to which God remits the sins of the ungodly, and takes them into his favour. To engage the mind of the reader in a fair and thorough investigation of the subject, in concluding what I have to say on baptism, I would ask him the following questions, and demand of him a specific answer, derived from the Acts of the Apostles:

1. Has the gospel ever been preached to the Gentiles by divine authority, and when was it first preached to them?

2. Has God given to the Gentiles repentance unto life or the remission of sin, and if he has, did he do it by faith in Jesus Christ without water baptism, or was it by faith, in water baptism?

I find no account of the gospel having been preached to the Gentiles, in the nine first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, which give a history of their labors for the first seven or eight years. Had the Apostles continued to preach as they had done from the day of Pentecost up to that time, the gospel would not up to this day have been sent to the Gentiles. As God sealed and confirmed the fact that he gave remission of sin to the Jews and Samaritans, and abolished their religious institutions and established the gospel among them by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, I ask the same testimony — the same miraculous gifts as God's seal and confirmation of the fact of the remission of sin among the Gentiles, and of the *principle* or *operation* through which remission was communicated to them, and that *by which* they received it. I ask for information and proof on these subjects in *a historical detail given by the direction of the Holy Spirit*, as the best evidence that the nature of the case affords. I have a right to expect it, because of the vast importance of the introduction of the gospel to the Gentiles

*to the nations of the whole world*—and of the necessity of a definite and explicit account from God himself, that there may be no difficulty or doubt upon the subject, which would be the case if the information was left to be collected from distant allusions, hints and references in the Epistles.

Now, reader, turn to the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and read it over carefully, and there you will see that the gospel was sent to the Gentiles by divine appointment, and that according to the testimony of all the prophets, and of Peter himself, and of the Holy Ghost, God gave *to the Gentiles* remission of sin before there was a word said about water baptism:—the truth of this was *sealed* and *confirmed* by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Turn to the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter, 2,–18, there you find Peter rehearsing the matter in order, and expounding it to the Jewish converts at Jerusalem, and *proving* to them that God had granted to the Gentiles remission of sin, which was in no way connected with water baptism whatever. This he proved by stating the *fact* that the moment they believed what he declared from the prophets, (see the 10<sup>th</sup> ch. 43) “*that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sin,*” the Holy Ghost fell on them as on Peter and the rest of the Apostles, at the beginning, as Christ had said in Acts i, 5. When they heard these things, they glorified God saying, *then* hath God also *to the Gentiles* granted repentance unto life. In this case Peter said not a word to them about water baptism, and they asked not a question about it, because it had nothing to do with the actual remission of their sins; the Gentiles having received remission before Peter directed them to be baptized. See ch. x, 47–48. In Acts xv, 7–9, we have Peter’s testimony repeated, in which he

says, that "God who knoweth the hearts, bare the Gentiles witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us, (Acts ii, 1-4) and put no difference between us and them, having purified their hearts by faith." This testimony, which satisfied Peter and the apostolic Christians in this matter, and which forever settled the principle according to which God gives remission of sin, purifies the heart and justifies the ungodly, ought to satisfy us. It proves that remission of sin is received by faith before baptism, and that the assurance and enjoyment of remission are to be found in the truth and reality of our faith in the *sealed record of God's gracious truth, and in a holy life*, and that to be baptised is the duty of those that believe.

God having put no difference between the Jews and Gentiles, having purified their hearts by faith, it is manifestly an error to look for remission of sin in baptism, where it is not promised and cannot be found. Instead of its being an act of *obedience* to be baptized *in order to obtain the remission of sin*, it is a total misapprehension of the design of baptism, and of God's method of giving remission. If it is not obtained through faith in Christ without baptism, the gospel does not authorise us to believe that it is obtained at all. There is as much scriptural authority for the baptism of infants in order to their salvation, as there is for the actual remission of sin in immersion — nei her can be sustained by scripture. We receive Christ by faith, and put him on in baptism. The faith of the Christian ends in Christ for remission, and not in baptism.

I have been thus particular, because among the true believers in Jesus Christ, who are made the children of God by faith, although there may be a difference in their views of baptism, they ought to fellowship each other as brethren.

There never can be any real practical Christian reformation among those who are wrong on the subject of justification or the remission of sin. They may build up a party for a time, through the influence of novelty, collision, and strife, but it must inevitably go down through the want of the cleansing influences of the blood of the atonement, and by unscriptural views and sentiments of the character and glory of Jesus Christ, and of christian duty.

The proof that I have adduced of remission of sin by faith without baptism, consisting in the gifts of the Holy Ghost, may be objected to, on account of their being miraculous. This objection arises from a misapprehension of the design and use of these gifts. They were in this case God's witness or proof, or confirmation of the truth of remission communicated by the gospel, and received by faith. Take away all that was miraculous, and we have destroyed the whole record of the fact, and the proof of it too, that God has given to the Gentiles remission of sin.

I am thus particular, because those who adopt the opinion of remission in baptism, put it out of their power to regard any as Christians who differ from them in baptism. They are compelled to give up pious pedobaptists to the uncovenanted mercies of God, and to regard them as in the same state with the heathen, which arises from a misapprehension of remission altogether; and they involve themselves in danger of eternal ruin, by relying for remission upon baptism, in which God never promised it.

Baptism has no more to do in procuring the actual remission of sin than the Lord's Supper has. They are both to be submitted and attended to in *consequence* of remission already received through faith in Christ. The assurance and enjoyment of remission are found in that faith by which God purifies the heart, and which prompts to obedience and works by love.



## ESSAY XV.

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### RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

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RELIGIOUS, or *Christian* Experience, is of great importance. Those persons who profess religion and have no Christian experience, have yet to learn their own depravity and corruption, the evil nature of sin, and the change of heart that is effected by divine grace, through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ by the gospel.

Man, by nature, is an outcast from God, and is involved in spiritual darkness, guilt, corruption and death.

The Christian religion is designed to remedy this state—to give spiritual light and life—to change and purify the heart, and impart eternal life to the soul.

Many despise what is called Christian experience; Infidels sneer at it; formalists, and nominal professors ridicule it. All this arises from their ignorance of what real religion is. Every Christian should be willing, like David, to celebrate the mercies of God vouchsafed to him, and be willing to say, “come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul;” and to “be ready always to give an answer to *every man* that asks him a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear.” Psal. lxxvi, 16: 1 Pet. iii, 15. It is a debt of gratitude that every Christian owes to his God and Saviour to do this, who is glorified thereby; and it is a debt of love he owes to his brethren, and even

to sinners who desire it, and who may be edified thereby, provided it be done in meekness and humility. And, indeed, when the Christian religion shall be restored to its spiritual simplicity and purity, they that fear and love the Lord, will speak often one to another about their religious experience, and they will let their light so shine before men that they will glorify the blessed Saviour more than is now done.

The subject of Christian experience is often made dark, and is confused by erroneous apprehensions; and Christians are unwilling to talk about it for want of due care in distinguishing between truth and error, and in fixing the sense and meaning of the terms made use of to express the views, feelings and exercises of the mind, when under the influence of divine truth. No person who passes from darkness, guilt and death, into a state of light and pardon and life, but what must have experience—must be possessed of something that he has *felt* and *realized*, which truly answers to these descriptions:—Of all this he is *conscious* in the present state and feeling of his mind. [Read pages 224–5 in this connection.]

Experience, in its general acceptation, means knowledge obtained by *practical proof* or *frequent trial*.—Knowledge acquired solely by the efforts of the intellect in reading and investigating any subject, is termed theoretical and speculative knowledge. Of this every person of common sense, with ordinary means, is capable; and it must, in some degree, go before experimental knowledge. Agreeably to this view of the subject, speculative, or theoretical Christianity, is acquired by the exercise of the intellect, in reading or hearing, and in investigating the Christian religion, as it is revealed in God's word. The design of investigation in this case, as in all others, is to ascertain the meaning and sense of the words and sen-

tences which compose the word of God, and which the Spirit of God gave to them when he first revealed them. But, alas, how few investigate the scriptures to obtain correct speculative knowledge of the Christian religion, as it is exhibited in God's word, even among the professors of it! This is owing to the confusion, darkness and contradictions, in which it is often involved by the views in which it is presented by the teachers of it.

In man's state of pollution and guilt, there are feelings still remaining, which in the hour of sorrow and fear, may melt at the voice of compassion and love. There are events in the store-house of God's Providence which bring the stoutest heart to a stand, and then the charge of guilt is no longer disregarded, and the gracious invitations of an Almighty Father are not despised. Anguish and doubt, and fear and pain enter the sinner's soul. To these feelings are the glad tidings of the gospel addressed. It is a message of love and deliverance to the guilty, distressed and helpless, and it descends upon the tide of the Saviour's blood. And many come, led by instinctive longings after peace and enjoyment, and try the gospel as the last expedient, after the failure of every other attempt to obtain happiness, and they find Him of whom Moses and the prophets did write by the light and influence of God's Spirit, through the gospel. Faith, in this case, by its justifying and sanctifying effects, brings a worm of the dust into union with the King of heaven, and converts a rebel against God, into an heir of glory, as it is the channel by which the divine testimony, concerning pardon through the cross of Christ, is conveyed to the understanding, and operates upon the heart. It is therefore not a work of merit, but of grace, and is merely the inlet by which spiritual light and influence, enter the soul, and purify it, and through which the au-

thority of God operates. All is of grace in man's salvation, and is communicated through the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ. And were his native powers and susceptibilities which render him capable of religion by the gospel of God's grace, ten thousand times greater than they are, they would avail him nothing without the mercy and grace of God, as they would be the powers and susceptibilities of a being, utterly lost, hopeless and helpless in himself. We are saved by grace, and have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sin.

To deny to man moral power of understanding and feeling, which God gave him, though exceedingly perverted, and which God addresses by the gospel, cannot honor God or benefit man, to say the least of it. Nor does such a denial add any thing to the scriptural account of man's absolute depravity, or invite in any measure the influences of God's Spirit, or give efficacy to his gospel upon the heart. Such views are often given of this subject as to prevent any attention to reading or hearing the gospel, and such as to deny to guilty man under the gospel, spiritual and moral faculties and susceptibilities altogether. No man has ever yet been able to explain any thing about the internal operations of the mind, and why should it be attempted in religion more than in any thing else?

True experimental Christianity is the truth of the gospel proved and confirmed by the judgment and by the feelings of the heart, and by frequent trials in practice. Practical religion includes speculative truth, but speculative truth is not always connected with experimental religion. One reason why it is so seldom, is, that there is so little of real speculative truth known in our country, on the subject of the Christian religion, owing to the causes before alleged, and to the fact that the gospel

record, read, or heard and understood, is often denied to have any part or lot in religious experience.

In regard to religious feelings, we cannot help being, in some degree, affected by what we really believe concerning our situation. And the great concern in this case, in order to right feelings, is to believe the truth. But how can this be done without its being known? From the account I have given of the condition of man in his ruined and helpless estate of sin and misery, it is manifest that there must be a *turning point* between it and the knowledge, love and enjoyment of God—and in passing from the one state to the other, there must be views and feelings corresponding with the change. That turning point is conversion, and the word of God's grace, which manifests his gospel character, and imparts the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, and presents correct views of our own when associated with his law, is the ordained means of God for producing the views and faith and feelings which answer to the change.

These are new covenant blessings communicated through the blood of Christ. The commencement of true faith is, the production of penitential feelings. The belief of our guilt necessarily produces painful, sorrowful feelings—a sense of sin and misery under the light of the gospel, awakens a desire for the divine favour, and God communicates relief or the pardon of sin by the gospel through faith in Jesus Christ. This brings peace into the soul. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and receive the promise of the Spirit. Here is an *experimental* change of heart; and it is a *great* change. They who have experienced it have passed from death unto life: they love God and his children. This they know by experience—by the proof

they possess in the actual states of the mind, consisting in their views, faith, love, and confidence, hope, desires and enjoyments which they derive from the religion of Jesus Christ. They are qualified for and desire to be members of the church of God, and to enjoy the fellowship of his people, and are willing to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is the same as to be baptized into Jesus Christ as their Saviour and lawgiver, and portion forever.

Christian experience however, is not confined to the views and feelings and religious exercises which are realized in conviction and conversion, or in the feelings of sorrow and happy deliverance in our first religious exercises of faith in Jesus Christ. It properly embraces and comprehends all the knowledge which the christian derives from the various circumstances and situations in which he is placed, and from the temptations and trials to which he is exposed through life. The effects of faithfully reading of the scriptures and of meditating upon them, and of disciplining and training the mind according to them, in spiritual-mindedness, and in doing good works, and of prayer, and of attending to all other religious duties, or the careless performance of them, and neglect of them, are fruitful sources of christian experience. The former increase and strengthen the christian's hope and happiness. The latter involves all in darkness and uncertainty. The christian religion as it is exhibited in the word of God, is true in theory, as it is in practice, and the experience of the christian proves it to be so. He finds all that it says about the corruptions and weakness of human nature, and the liability of the christian to err, to be true. He finds too that his assurance, strength and safety, are in Jesus Christ, and in a patient waiting upon

the Lord or in a habitual devotion of soul to him. His spiritual powers and susceptibilities are improved by being exercised on divine things; and he grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, by his word dwelling in him richly, and by his being engaged in doing every good work to promote his religion, and the happiness of his people.

Wrong or erroneous views of the *doctrines* and *ordinances* of the gospel and of christian duties, produce errors in christian practice and experience, and defects in the christian character. This is, and ever has been, the real cause of all the diversities and contrarieties in the christian character, among the christian sects.

The religious experiences of different persons differ from each other as their theories and systems are different, according to which they have been taught, and by which their religious exercises have been regulated. And all these differ from the faith and the religion of the New Testament, as their order and manner of instruction differ from the order and manner of the gospel. A person who is taught that the death of Jesus Christ was not vicarious—that redemption and the forgiveness of sin are not by the grace of God through his blood, that he died only as other good men die, and not as a sin-offering—and that his blood has nothing to do in the divine government in the pardon of sin, and that sin is remitted by *being baptized* and in the *act of immersion*—such a person will have no experience of the guilt and odiousness of sin, and of the grace and mercy of God in pardoning it through that blood which was shed for its remission, and which cleanses from all sin. Nor can he honour and adore Jesus Christ, as the apostolic christians did, and as the redeemed in glory do. His feelings, affections, sympathies, and conduct unless it is hypocritical, are altogether dif-

ferent from those who receive Christ for their wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Such an individual would make light of sin, if public opinion would permit him, and of Jesus Christ too, and of christian experience, as these things are viewed and realized by those whose hearts have been made to feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and have been broken on account of it, and have been healed by the pardoning mercy and grace of God, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious. The ordinances of the gospel to such an individual, are altogether different from what they are in the view of the persons I have described. He would talk about them, and engage in their use with views and feelings totally different from those who by faith have eaten the flesh and drank the blood of the Son of God as the great expiatory sacrifice for sin, and who have been baptized into Jesus Christ, in consequence of the divine favour bestowed upon them through the blood of Christ. These have more christian enjoyment at a common meal in gratitude to God, than he can ever have with his present views, in any of the ordinances of the gospel.

No person can have a religious experience of *pardoned sin through the blood of Christ*, whose heart has not been purified by that blood through faith. To have a profitable, happy christian experience, christians must regard all scripture as given by inspiration of God, and as profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that they may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works — and they may abound in the works of the Lord to do them.



## ESSAY XVI.

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### PRAYER.

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PRAYER, in *Christian* worship, is a solemn address to God in the name of and through faith in Jesus Christ, consisting in *adoration*, or an expression of our sense of God's glorious perfections; *confession* of our sin; *supplication* for mercy and forgiveness; *intercession* for blessings on others; and *thanksgiving*, or an expression of gratitude to God for his mercies and benefits.

Prayer has also been defined to be the offering up of our desires unto God for things agreeable to his will, through the mediation of Jesus Christ by faith.

If prayer be the offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Jesus Christ, through faith, that will and the character and offices of Jesus Christ must be known and strictly attended to, and confidently relied on, and our desires must be agreeable to God's will, when we pray.

In prayer there are a number of things in which our situation differs from the situation of those who lived in the Apostolic age, which are necessary to be attended to, in order to avoid error in our views, expectations and exercises, and to be fruitful in this most delightful and profitable Christian exercise and duty.

When the disciples asked Jesus Christ to teach them how to pray, and when he taught them what to pray for, and the manner in which they were to pray, (Math. vi, 9-

13. Luke xi, 1-11) they knew but very little of his character, mission, religion or kingdom, in comparison with what is known by the least of his disciples who are now in his kingdom. Under their exceedingly limited and imperfect state of knowledge, he taught them to pray in a way and after a manner, that were suited to it, and in reference to future developments. At that time the New Covenant was not established, the kingdom had not come, Jesus had not been glorified and the Spirit was not given. At that time he did not teach his disciples to pray for or to ask any thing in his name, as he afterwards did. John xvi, 24. After he was glorified, the kingdom was erected, and the Spirit was given who taught the Apostles and the disciples immediately, the nature of his religion and reign. These were done before any portion of the New Testament was written, and it was written afterwards by the inspirations and under the influence of the Spirit at different times. These inspirations and revelations of the Spirit supplied for a considerable time the place of Christ's personal teaching and the place of a written record. After the record was completed the miraculous gifts and supernatural revelations ceased, and we are not again to expect them nor to ask for them. We now have his instructions in the gospel, and when we pray, we are to ask God to teach us through the reading and hearing of his word. We are now taught the will of God and what we are to pray for, by his written word, and by our wants and necessities. In this sentiment all protestant Christians agree. They say, that "the former ways of God's revealing himself unto his people by immediate revelations being ceased, the whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in scripture or by good and necessary consequence, may be deduc-

ed, to which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the spirit, or traditions of men." They further say, that "these things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of the scripture or other, that the unlearned, in the due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of the same. And thus, the word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the scriptures, may have hope."

God exerts a governing and controlling power on the course of things in the world, as well as on the spirit and body of man. Without our being able to explain these things philosophically, unless we believe and realize the truth of them, we cannot discern the use, or discharge the duty of prayer in faith.

We are the sustained creatures of God from moment to moment, and the cessation of his will that we exist, will be the cessation of our existence. These things we know by faith. By the same means we know that God gives birth to all the appearances and operations of nature by the elements and laws which he created and sustains, as he does to the states and operations of mind. He gives us also redemption and the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace, through the blood of Christ, and has appointed the gospel as the means of our faith and religious intercourse with him. And he has appointed prayer as a most essential and necessary exercise and duty, through and by which he communicates divine influence and strength to the soul, and holds communion with the spirit.

As God commands us to pray to him through faith in the name of Jesus Christ, for things according to his will,

he must intend us to believe that he regards our prayer, and has ordained it as necessary to his glory and to our good.

Michaelis, specifies the following benefits of prayer as some of the blessings which God bestows through it. "It imparts a sensible form or realty to our abstract or theoretical faith, and reduces it to practice before the throne of God, and thus renders it a better shield against the assaults of vice, which come armed with the powers of sense. It renders us familiar with God and spiritual and invisible things as they are revealed in the gospel. It makes us recollect and realize the presence of the invisible God, more frequently and feelingly, as he has revealed himself amid our ordinary vocations. It familiarizes us with God's law, and his grace in Christ, and our duty, and makes us afraid of transgressing the divine will and indisposes us to do so, and causes shame before God for our past sins. And lastly, it awakens a lively feeling of love and gratitude to God for all his favors."

By humble, faithful prayer, the heart is more effectually purified by the blood of Christ, and the soul imbued with the divine influence, than in any other way. The Spirit of God in his gracious influence is present, and he gives to the exercise of prayer divine spiritual effects in the feelings and enjoyments of the soul, answerable to the promises in his Word. Agreeably to the divine constitution of things over which Jesus Christ presides, the repetition of proper spiritual ideas and sentiments by the use of God's word and other appropriate language, revive and strengthen the views and sentiments, feelings and affections which they originally produce and express.

From this state of things in the divine economy, arises the benefit of all religious exercises in reading God's word, in meditation, in prayer and in praise, and in re

ligious conversation, and in social public worship in general.

The religious states of mind which are produced, not by foreign mixtures or superinduced faculties, but by divine influence in the use of God's word, through prayer and other religious exercises, cannot exist in the mind without these exercises, because these are the very means that God has ordained by which he imparts and produces them. Therefore, those persons *who do not pray and perform these works of piety, or who do not do the will of God, do not possess or enjoy them.*

Although we are not to look for immediate inspirations and revelations of the Spirit to teach us verbally the things of God, as the Apostles possessed them, yet we need the gracious and sanctifying influences of God's Spirit in acquiring the true spiritual sense and meaning of the scriptures. These are communicated in the prayerful exercise of searching and investigating the scriptures.

When we pray for the conversion of sinners, and for the accomplishment of any end, it ought always to be done in reference to the use of the means which God appointed, and with the purpose of acquiescing and going along with him in using them. If our prayers do not produce these effects upon ourselves they are not of faith. A person who prays for the conversion of the world, or of his family and neighbors, and does not use the means which God has appointed for effecting it—if he does not instruct them in the scriptures, or aid in sending scripture instruction to them, he does not pray in faith, as the prayer of faith is as much concerned in the use of the means that God has appointed as it is for his agency, for accomplishing the end.

God converts no soul by the gospel but by its being

heard or read and believed. And there seems to be no other limitation annexed to the divine promises of divine influences and effects, than what is fixed by the faith and conduct of the people of God. It appears, by an attentive examination of the subject, that the prayer and conduct of faith in the use of God's means have, by a fixed law of the divine government, an absolute efficiency, such however as originates purely in the appointment of God, as certainly as effects follow their causes and partake of their nature in any visible operation of nature. This is as much the law of the divine economy and procedure in spiritual operations and influence on the soul of man, as gravitation is a law of the physical world on matter.

The success of our efforts, consequently, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and in advancing his kingdom and glory, are in a due proportion to the *scriptural* means we use, through a true practical faith, for these purposes. Under these limitations, God seems to be so much on the side of man's spiritual improvement and happiness, as not to have reserved to himself the right, if I may be allowed the expression, to withhold any good thing that will correspond with the *scriptural faith*, and *prayers*, and *labors*, of those who walk uprightly. Why should it be thought that in the gracious, spiritual government of God, every thing is at loose ends, and left to contingencies which are in no wise under the influence of a regular system of causation, superintended and managed by Jesus Christ, who is supreme while there is such a close and necessary connection between cause and effect, means and ends, by divine appointment, in the natural world; seeing, too, that the latter is subordinate to, and is sustained for the benefit of the former? Is not the word of God truth, and is He not a God of faithfulness and truth? By how much christians believe and trust in God,

and pray and act *according to the sense and meaning of his word, in waiting upon him and in doing his will*, by so much will He perform all his promises, and advance his religion and kingdom in the world.

If God is doing no mighty work among us, it is for the same reason that Jesus Christ did not many mighty works in a certain place, because of their unbelief. No want of power or benevolence belong to God, or unwillingness to exercise his kindness; but we set bounds to the Holy One of Israel by our unscriptural, party, selfish views and desires, and by our faithlessness, indolence or unconcern for his honor and glory according to the gospel. He cannot deny himself. His word is truth, and cannot be altered and yet retain its divine character and efficacy. His language is now as it was of old, "I am the Lord thy God. which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Israel would none of me. So I gave them unto their own heart's lusts; and they walked in their own counsels. Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured forever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and with the honey out of the rock, should I have sustained thee." Psal. lxxxi, 10-16.

While God reserves to himself the right to bestow his gracious blessings upon the souls of men, he claims the right also of ordaining the means of doing it, and requires of his people strict subordination to his will in the use of them. Agreeably to his own method and means he gives to his people the key that unlocks the sacred store house, and employs them as workers with him in the administering,

its blessings to themselves, and in distributing its treasures to others. Many poor souls are however starving at the door from an unwillingness of his professed people to use the key which he has given them to unlock the door, and to use the means of distributing its treasures. This is the reason why there is but little more of this earth covered by the gospel of Jesus Christ, with the exception of America, than there was when the last of the Apostles died, and the reason why religion partakes so little of the spirit of its author.

For many hundreds of years christians have been divided, and have expended their strength in opposition to each other, and have thereby done the work of the common enemy instead of being united in Jesus Christ, and making it a common cause against the prince of darkness. This is the reason why the christian religion does not now prevail among all nations. And were the world to be converted agreeably to the present state of things in regard to sectarian christianity, it would need to be converted over again. It would fall entirely short of that state of his religion and kingdom which Jesus Christ came into the world to establish. Were the kingdom and the dominion, which are to be given to the saints of the Most High, to be given to either of the christian sects, there is not one of them that is prepared to receive them: they are all too much engaged "in sacrificing unto their own net and in burning incense to their own drag." Hab. i, 16. In making these remarks I have not an unkind feeling towards any of them,—I esteem all as my brethren who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; nor would I disturb the peace and happiness of any of their churches, but would have them to cherish more supeme love to Jesus Christ, as the one Lawgiver and their common Head, and come nearer together in the unity of the Spirit and in



the bonds of peace. I would exhort them and myself to enter more deeply into the meaning and spirit of the intercessary prayer of Jesus Christ, and pray, like him, "that all who believe in him through the word of the Apostles may be one, as he is in the Father and the Father in him; that they may be one in them, that the world may believe that the Father hath sent him," John xvii, 20, 21: and act out the spirit of the prayer in christian fellowship and effort. A leading object in our prayers ought to be, that our own minds and wills be according to the mind of God, and that we may acquiesce in the method, and go along with God in the use of the means, that he has ordained for our own happiness, and for the conversion of the world. The supposed unwillingness of God to convert sinners, and the creeds and systems based upon it, arise from the failure of the means which men employ to do it, which are inconsistent with those that God has ordained to accomplish it. God's *will* to convert sinners is according to his own method and means. He is willing to convert sinners by the gospel, and in no other way, and by the use of human agency in instructing mankind in the sense and meaning of his word, and by a consistent and godly conduct. Men pray to God to make him willing to save sinners. They seem to think that they are more willing than God is. Their prayers to God ought to be, that they themselves, and all other christians might be willing to use the means in the way and manner that he has ordained for their conversion.

Jesus Christ has all power in heaven and in earth for the very purpose of converting the world; and he is the unchangeable God, and is always willing, by the faithful use of the means he has ordained, to convert sinners. His gospel is the power of God to salvation to them that believe; but the theories and speculations of men are no part of it, and very often nullify it.

The Apostles were successful in converting sinners because they pursued God's method of doing it. Their prayers and their labors went together. The long period of darkness that succeeded was owing to the exclusion of God's word from the people. And the revival of religion in the 16th century, and its success since, have been owing to the knowledge and use of the gospel of God. The translation of the scriptures and missionary efforts—the use of Sunday Schools and Bible classes, are all in the way of the divine method and means for the advancement of the religion and kingdom of Christ. *All things on the part of God are ready, and now is his time.* Christians ought to believe this and to realize that their *union and ONENESS in the Father and the Son, through the word of the Apostles* and acquiescence with God in its use in promoting their own piety and happiness, the conversion of sinners, and the glory of Christ, are their indispensable duty. Their prayers are not the offering up of their desires to God for things agreeable to his will, through the mediation of Jesus Christ by faith, if they do not produce these very effects.

Prayer is essential to the spiritual comfort and happiness of the christian. A sense of want excites desire, and desire, if agreeable to God's will, is the very essence of prayer. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after." Psal. xxvii, 4.

Prayer must be made with confession of our sins and acknowledgment of God's mercy: "I prayed and made confession." Dan. ix, 4. Sin is a burden of which confession unloads the soul. We often feel a sense of pardon communicated at the time of prayer. When burdened by a sense of neglected or of violated duty, confession of our sins, with faith in God's forgiveness through the atonement, and disburdening our souls into the bosom of our

heavenly Father, while yet speaking he hears us. In drawing nigh to him he draws nigh to us. "Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee. Psal. 1, 15. In this world we are to expect tribulations, yet our prayers are answered with respect to them when we are supported under them. When they work for our good they produce the peaceful fruits of righteousness. They lead us to fix our hope and confidence on God in Christ, and the eternal weight of glory.



He that would have his prayers answered must keep God's commandments, "whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." 1 John iii, 22. "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave commandment. He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. This is the confidence we have with him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us." 1 John v, 13, 14.

Prayer doubles the christian's enjoyments. While the natural food feeds the body, prayer and thanksgiving for it feeds the soul—it is sanctified by the word of God and by prayer. When all our desires and wants are satisfied prayer will be converted into praise. Till then we must live by prayer, and by prayerful effort according to the word of God, lie at the mercy seat. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." Psal. lxy, 2.





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